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A MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES ROBERTSON,  
OF WELLINGBOROUGH.

A SHORT period only has elapsed since my communication of a brief memoir of the late Rev. H. W. Gardiner, of Barnstaple, was inserted in your miscellany. I am now called upon to furnish some account of another long and much beloved friend, the Rev. James Robertson, late minister of the Congregational church in Cheese Lane, Wellingborough, who departed this life on the twenty-third of June last.

I shall commence this memorial by an extract of a letter written to me, since my friend's decease, by his sorrowing widow, who is left solitary and childless, to mourn the departure of a most affectionate and beloved husband. "I know but little of my dear and honoured husband's early life: many things that he related to me of his youthful days are, I am sorry to say, now forgotten by me; my mind has been, for the four last years and a half, so completely absorbed by his distressing affliction: all, however, that I do know, I will state. He was, as you probably know, a native of Newcastle-on-Tyne; and his father was connected with shipping affairs; but in what way, or what his business exactly was, I am not able to state. He was, I know, a Dissenter, and brought up his family to attend regularly at the house of God. I have often heard my husband most feelingly lament the death of his mother, whom he lost in early life. As his father married again, he had a most uncomfortable home: and I have often heard him say he was cruelly treated by his step-mother. He was, however, sent to a good school, and many times spoke of his master in the highest terms, and of his very excellent plan in instructing youth. His thirst for knowledge was at this time so great, that nothing, he used to say, gave him so much pleasure as a new book.

"On leaving school, he was put apprentice to a grocer. Whether or not he served his time fully out I cannot say, though he probably did, as he was not very young when he entered at Wymondley. During his apprenticeship, when the business of the day was over, he regularly spent his evenings with his highly esteemed pastor, whose name was, I think, Smith: with him he used to read, and from him he received

further instruction ; I suppose in classical learning. This is all the information I can supply respecting my dear husband's early years ; and I regret that my memory has so much failed me. He went, immediately on his leaving Wymondley, to a congregation at Eversden, in Cambridgeshire, I think, in December, 1804. In July, 1809, he removed to Stretton, in Warwickshire : since which time, he has been well known to yourself. We were married in October, 1812."

My own acquaintance with Mr. Robertson commenced when he was a student at Wymondley, under the patronage of the trustees of the late W. Coward, Esq. We met at Rowell, in Northamptonshire, where I was on a visit for a few days, and he was there spending a part, or the whole of the college vacation. This was, I suppose, in 1802 or 1803. From the time of this short and casual intercourse, until his settlement at Stretton-under-Foss, a village about eight miles from Coventry, our opportunities of meeting were few. As, however, from my connexions with some of the members of the congregation at Stretton, I had the means of uniting in a recommendation of my friend to this place, which I often visited, our mutual regard increased, and gradually ripened into lasting esteem, and intimate friendship. Subsequently to this period of his fixing at Stretton, we met as often as the distance of 150 miles permitted, at our respective places of abode ; frequently corresponded, and sometimes took a journey together.

The well-known and most admirable discourse on the "Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister," by the Rev. Robert Hall, and which is inserted in Vol. I. of Gregory's edition of the Works of that most eloquent of preachers, was delivered on the occasion of Mr. Robertson's ordination at Stretton. This sermon, which for elegance of diction, for persuasive wisdom, and for truly evangelical sentiments and counsels, is, as I believe, unequalled, contains a testimony of the high esteem in which the preacher held my departed friend, at that early period of his life and ministry. My friend resided at Stretton, in the intelligent and faithful discharge of his duty as a Christian minister, and in the enjoyment of as much leisure and happiness as usually fall to the lot of men so situated, until the year 1825, when, in consequence of the rudeness of some of the persons who conducted the singing in public worship, and the want of becoming vigour and decision on the part of the officers of the church, he, greatly to the regret of the far larger part of the people, determined to relinquish his connexion with Stretton, and removed to Creaton, in Northamptonshire, where he continued about a year. This situation, he soon discovered, was likely to be productive of little satisfaction ; and he complied with an invitation to become the minister of a very respectable society at Wellingborough, in the same county. Here he pursued his course with unabating energy, until an agonizing and overwhelming malady arrested it, which, after four years and a half of intense mental suffering, brought

him to the grave. The disease which thus terminated was, I have no doubt, originally a derangement of the functions of the liver, which, there is reason to believe, had for many years been increasing. Whether my friend had been in early life sufficiently attentive to the state of the digestive organs, and the regularity of the secretions, on which the bodily and mental health so greatly depend, I am unable to say. He was, I know, a hard student from his youth up; prompted by the internal spring which the disinterested love of letters alone can supply; and urged by his sense of duty, to qualify himself to the utmost for the discharge of the sacred function to which his life and powers were devoted. Of the precise extent of his academical attainments during his continuance at Wymondley, I cannot speak definitely. His diligence, the solidity of his understanding, and the unswerving integrity of his character, rendered him an object of great satisfaction to his classical tutor, the Rev. W. Ward; and though some unhappy differences existed between himself and his divinity tutor, Mr. Parry, which caused his departure somewhat prematurely from the academy, there is no question but that he was subsequently regarded by Mr. Parry with unfeigned respect. My friend by no means imagined, when he left the academy, that his education was complete, or that he was at liberty to pursue with diminished attention the studies which he had commenced: his life was altogether dedicated to study, that he might show himself to be "a workman that needed not to be ashamed."

It seems not unlikely that, in the long and earnest application of his mind to such pursuits, there might be a too great disregard to prudential maxims of health, by which possibly the constitutional tendency to torpor of the visceral organs was increased. A probable account may thus be suggested of the causes which occasioned temporary dejection, and communicated some degree of morbid and melancholic appearance to my friend's countenance; though it was often lighted up by the beamings of intelligence, and the gaiety of heart to which he was far from being a stranger. No man enjoyed, in a greater degree, the social and unreserved intercourse of friendship; or more thoroughly displayed in colloquial intercourse, the predominant sentiments of reverence for God; of unbending uprightness and sincerity; of habitual and strong regard to truth and honour; and of abstinence from all that is at variance with entire purity of mind and heart, mingled with a readiness to give and receive delight, in the spontaneous effusions of harmless humour, the reciprocation of amusing anecdotes, and the unstudied display of the genuine kindness and essential excellency of a bosom at peace with God, and endowed with philanthropic feelings to men.

The discernment, discretion, and practical wisdom by which my friend was distinguished, attached to him, in no common degree, an influence among his ministerial brethren, and among surrounding congregations, very much akin to authority of the most useful kind; an authority not founded on arrogant assumptions, but the native effect of superior

intelligence and worth. A steadfast assertor of ecclesiastical independence, he neither coveted supremacy, nor would submit to any other claims than those of knowledge, piety, and intrinsic dignity of principle and action. For the meretricious trappings by which imbecility, pride, and self-conceit, strive to conceal their inanity, and invest themselves with the fictitious semblance of honour and superiority, he had the most entire contempt: and while he was ever ready to perform homage to substantial religion and piety, he despised the flimsy, noisy zeal that is allied to weakness, superstition, and "the traditions of men," and frowned with sternness, not to be propitiated by ostentatious assumptions of superior sanctity, on all that indicated a vain and self-sufficient complacency. The great purpose of his life was to acquire real and intrinsic excellence; with perhaps of somewhat too much indifference to appearances, and too little endeavour to conciliate the feebler and more imbecile of his species. A characteristic of my departed friend most eminent and admirable, and which commends itself to universal estimation, and especially to the imitation of nonconforming ministers, was his strict frugality, combined with a generous and hospitable temper. His pecuniary means were never large, his expenditure for valuable books very considerable, but he was never in debt, and ever prepared to meet with cheerfulness, and gratify with promptitude whatever claims could justly be made on his humane and Christian feelings. To no man, I am persuaded, were the well-known lines of the Roman satirist more appropriate,—

"Justum et tenacem propositi virum,  
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,  
Non vultus instantis tyranni  
Mente quatit solida, —."

"Aurum irreperitum, et sic melius situm  
Cum terra celat, spernere fortior  
Quam cogere humanos in usus,  
Omne sacrum rapiente dextra."

An extended and comprehensive study of theology engaged my friend's attention through the whole of his maturer years, and to it he rendered all other studies subsidiary. He was not, I think, deeply read in dry and systematic bodies of divinity; the sacred Scriptures were his chosen guides, and to the elucidation of them his most strenuous efforts were directed. That such efforts might be most successfully made, the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament formed a considerable part of his daily reading. His principal assistants in such reading were, not voluminous commentaries, but the critical aids which modern philological writers have abundantly supplied to the students of sacred literature. His acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages was constantly advancing to greater extent and accuracy, by a continued perusal of the most distinguished writers in both these languages; while his knowledge of the Hebrew Bible was extended by frequent reference to the cognate dialects, and the Septuagint version. The best



productions both of English and continental scholars attracted a large share of his attention ; and the comparatively small but excellent collection of books brought together in his library, furnishes proof of the skill with which it was formed. His resources were too limited to permit an unrestricted indulgence in the purchase of books, so that in a selection of, I believe, two or three thousand volumes, few can be found but such as were required for the attainment of his grand pursuit. I believe that generally the books which furnish the study may be regarded as an index of the character of its possessor ; and I own that I have often been mortified at glancing over the contents of studies to which I have had access, and which are so denominated, as "*lucus a non lucendo*." Not such was the study of the friend of whom I write ; it was the study of a scholar, whose happiest and busiest hours were passed in it, sacred to devotion and good letters.

The success which attended the pursuits I have noticed may be collected by those who were not personally conversant with Mr. Robertson from his writings ; for though he himself published but little, he was for many years an almost monthly contributor to the *Eclectic Review*. I will mention one of these critical disquisitions, the subject of which was a work published by Dr. Turton, the present Dean of Peterborough, and Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, under the assumed denomination of *Crito Cantabrigiensis*. I have not the review in my possession, and have therefore no very distinct remembrance either of it, or the subject of it. It was, however, a controversial treatise, in reply, I believe, to some harsh strictures on Professor Porson, by the Rev. Mr. Evanson. Soon after the appearance of the review, our common friend, the Rev. Dr. J. P. Smith, received a most courteous and gentlemanly letter from Dr. Turton, who had conjectured that the review in question had proceeded from Dr. Smith's pen. Mr. Robertson was at my house when Dr. Smith inquired of him if he were not the writer, to which he assented ; on which Dr. Turton's letter was put into his hands, as the person to whom it belonged. Among other complimentary expressions, the letter stated the gratification the writer felt from his work being reviewed by a scholar, who was competent to the undertaking. When speaking on the topic of satisfactory praise, Cicero describes it to be, "*Laus ab laudato viro*." I mention this anecdote, in proof of the accuracy and extent of my friend's literary proficiency, to which it bears a high testimony. The mistake was soon rectified, and a very respectful reply was quickly received in the proper quarter.

I will specify one instance more to evince the literary acumen of my late friend. A critique was published, in the same review, on a translation of the Book of Job, by Dr. J. M. Good, soon after that work appeared. The author was exceedingly displeased at the article, which was written by Mr. Robertson, and made some animadversions not abounding in courtesy upon it. Mr. Robertson defended his criticisms

in a manner which will, I am persuaded, convince every impartial and well-informed reader of the defence, that he had advanced no allegations that were not founded on truth, and that his qualifications, as a reviewer, were at least equal to those of Dr. Good, as a translator. Mr. Robertson's series of reviews commenced about the year 1814, and was carried on until 1834. These critiques embrace a wide extent of subjects, and are demonstrative of the sound judgment, the Christian and liberal sentiments, and the acute intelligence of their lamented author.

The readers of this notice will easily form a just opinion of the characteristic qualifications of the subject of it, for the discharge of his duties as a Christian preacher, from the observations just made respecting his censorial productions. His distinguishing excellencies consisted in the just and enlarged conceptions he entertained of the truths of Christianity, and in the eminent skill and judgment with which he enunciated them. His logic was indeed more apparent and cogent than his rhetoric; as his faculties of imagination and fancy were inferior to the clearness and strength of his reasoning powers; so that attention, on the part of his hearers, was essential to their instruction and improvement. No attentive hearer could depart from his public services without becoming wiser and better. His ministrations were not confined within the limits of his pastoral charge, but were extended to the several villages in his vicinity. What the effects of such exertions, continued through thirty or more years, were, is not for human discernment to determine. My friend entertained very humble notions in reference to his own services, and was, I fear, sometimes unduly depressed by the seemingly small utility which followed them. Conversing with him on such matters, several years before his final illness, he observed that he was not aware of any real conversion that had been produced by his endeavours. Nothing short of most culpable rashness, and unfounded presumption, would draw from hence a conclusion adverse to the piety, zeal, and wisdom, by which his ministry was conducted. As the ever-living head of the church assigns to each of his servants their several ability, according to his own will, so he reserves to himself the life-giving energy which alone can render the most admirable talents and virtues conducive to the salvation of one soul. "Paul may plant, Apollos water, but the increase is God's." The sight of much genuine usefulness resulting from his faithful and persevering course is, indeed, the highest reward that can enrich and bless a servant of Christ, in the present state; but we can without difficulty perceive, that even a rarer assemblage of Divine gifts may adorn him who, to the end, is enabled to maintain his hope in God, his unwavering belief of the excellency and power of the blessed Gospel, and patiently to wait until his heavenly Master shall dismiss him from the performance of labours which seem to be unprofitable, and from the numberless discouragements and apprehensions that fill his path

with obstacles and sorrow. It is no new case for the most eminent servants of God to exclaim, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of Jehovah disclosed?" Such was the feeling of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and his most distinguished followers may well be resigned to tread a path similar to that in which the Son of God has gone before them.

We are, however, not at liberty, for a moment, to conclude that upright, enlightened, and persevering exertions in the ministry of Christ are ever without effect: his faithful servants are without exception, "unto God, a fragrant odour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." Such considerations may sustain the drooping spirit of the dejected labourer, while they project an ominous and appalling shade over the future prospects of all who dare to abide in unbelief and impenitence, and thus do all that lies in them to frustrate the blessed designs of the Gospel, by wearying the patience, and counteracting the prayers and expostulations of the servants of God, who would enrich them with "durable riches and righteousness."

The cessation of Mr. Robertson's active exertions has been suggested, and the probable cause of it indicated. The disease came upon him with such force, as compelled him to give up all mental occupation, to discontinue his ministry, and to seclude himself, as much as possible, from social and friendly intercourse; while the dark cloud of melancholy that pressed on his imagination rendered him a victim to despondency, and at times to utter despair. During the protracted continuance of this most afflicted state, his affectionate wife watched over him with almost unexampled tenderness and patience. For more than four years she, with myself, and other friends, indulged a hope that the darkness would break away, and the sunlight of peace and hope revive his forlorn and dejected spirit. It was, however, the inscrutable will of the Supreme Disposer of all events, that such a time of refreshing should not dawn upon him, until "mortality was swallowed up of life." The lesson thus inculcated is, "Be still, and know that I am God." Students, of any class or age, may not justly conclude from this mournful case, that a life devoted to study is less favourable to health and mental energy than other occupations: such a conclusion would be both groundless and pernicious. But it may serve to induce a careful and unremitting regard to those prophylactic measures of dietetic and moral discipline, which are commonly conducive, in an eminent degree, to the sanity of both body and mind. Where there is no latent principle of disease inherent in the constitution, such precautions almost certainly assure to the most indefatigable student, a happy continuance of the

"——— Mens sana in corpore sano,"

so devoutly to be desired; and without which there can be but little either of comfort or usefulness.

A still more false and injurious consequence it would be, to draw from the mournful instance which my friend's last days present, that a long continuance of intelligent and conscientious obedience to the will of God, and an unremitting pursuit of the noblest objects of human exertion, may fail to produce their natural effects, in the immortal happiness of any who have thus lived, on account of their being subjected to such a morbid condition as darkens their vision of things present and future, extinguishes their consolations, and tortures their imagination by exaggerated conceptions of their failures, and by agonizing fears, that they have forfeited the favour of God, and sinned beyond the possibility of forgiveness. That my departed friend was agitated by such a frightful conflict of emotions, to the last moments of his mortal being, forms not the shadow of a reason for questioning the sterling excellence of his character, or doubting that the instant of his dissolution was the commencement of felicity and glory that will bloom through eternity. The promises of God on which his faith was built and confirmed, during the season of mental vigour, are not to be enervated or changed by the frailty and oscillation of a vitiated condition of the nervous temperament: like their divine Author, they abide immutable through all changes, and will finally illustrate their glory by the temporary obscurations to which they are liable in this feverish condition of flesh and blood. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

It is truly observed, that the life of a student offers little of variety or amusing anecdote to a biographer. My friend's course was of this equable kind, so that these few lines tell nearly all the chief points of it. I am not in possession of materials by which to trace the early progress of his intellectual attainments, his plans of study, or the manner in which he became convinced of the supreme importance and value of real religion; so that though my narrative is meagre and scanty, it has exhausted all my materials, and I must content myself with this imperfect account of one of the most endeared of my friends, over whose ashes it was my sad duty to pronounce a funeral oration. That duty, painful as it was, was alleviated by an entire belief that my friend had cast off the slough of mortality, and with it all its agonizing accompaniments; that he was gone but a little before me, to that blissful state for which, through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, I trust I shall be found worthy, where "the days of mourning shall be ended," when "the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall lead all his sincere disciples to fountains of living water, and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

*Uxbridge Common, August, 1842.*

W. W.

A CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND SUBJECTS  
OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

## No. II.

A KNOWLEDGE of the opinions and customs which prevail among any people is often requisite to a right interpretation of their language; and it is always necessary to a correct deduction of inferences from brief statements, respecting any of their peculiar practices. This principle is universally acknowledged by critics, and it commends itself to the common sense of all. In interpreting every other portion of the New Testament, we avail ourselves of the aid which Jewish antiquities afford, and use them, to elucidate both the meaning of the words employed, and the nature of the things referred to. It would, therefore, be most unreasonable, were we to consider a rite instituted by our Lord among the Jewish people, as though no rites had previously existed, with which they were familiar; or were we to judge of Christian baptism, as though there were no other baptisms which the first Christians had been accustomed to observe. Inasmuch as the writers of the New Testament were well acquainted with the rites enjoined by the law, and addressed persons equally familiar with them, they could not but mention Christian baptism in a manner very different from what they would have done, had no similar institution before existed. The long established, frequent, public observance of baptism by the Jews would require, that clear statements should be often made of any thing in which the new rite differed from the old, and would make more than a brief mention superfluous, wherever they agreed. This consideration will justify the plan we have adopted, of attending in the first place to the nature and usage of the baptisms of the Jews, and of some other ceremonies of their religion. It will also evince the propriety of our still further delaying our consideration of the baptism instituted by our Lord, and observed by his followers, till we have examined the baptism of John, which preceded, and for a while accompanied it. A knowledge of the nature and usage of his baptism, who prepared the way for our Lord, will contribute to a right understanding of that baptism, which the disciples of Christ began to administer at the same time, and in the same country. If we can ascertain in what way the purification with water, which he performed, was connected with repentance and the forgiveness of sins, we shall be assisted in our inquiry—how the purification, with water, which they performed, was connected with faith in Christ, and the regeneration of the soul.

John the Baptist, being of the descendants of Aaron, was born to the priesthood, but, by Divine appointment, he was withdrawn from the service of the temple to minister to him who was superior to

the temple. Like the prophets of ancient days, he appeared as a teacher of religion. He proclaimed the approach of the Redeemer of mankind, and taught that a purification of the mind was necessary for all who would participate in the blessings of his reign. He exhorted the people, therefore, to repent, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven approaches;" and he purified them with water, directing them to the Saviour, who, he declared, would purify their minds by the sacred influence he imparted to them. "I purify you with water;—He will purify you with a sacred influence." The great object of his ministry was to bring men to repentance, and thus to prepare them for the manifestation of the Redeemer. With this repentance, which he inculcated as a duty, the baptism which he administered was, in some manner, connected. In what way? The rite performed by John was a ceremonial purification. Was this its design, that it should be administered only to those who had repented, who possessed the moral purification, denoted by the ceremonial, so that their baptism should be a *sign* of their avowed and accredited repentance?—Or was it performed on the persons of the impenitent, not only to exhibit the duty, but to produce the experience of repentance? Was it the præternatural *means* of effecting this moral change?—Or was it merely an *emblem* of repentance, administered to all who chose to receive it; who, when they witnessed it, were admonished of their duty, and when they accepted it, acknowledged his authority who administered it as a Divine institution, and their obligation to live according to his instructions? The following remarks are submitted to the reader, as affording a decisive answer to these questions:—

I. That the baptism of John was not a *sign* of repentance, that it was not intended exclusively for those who had repented, or who professed that they had, appears from these considerations:—

1. None of the purifications, and none of the ritual services of the Jewish religion, possessed this character, or were designed to be administered to a superior class. As we have already shown, they were emblems of what ought to be in the minds of all, and not signs of what really, or professedly, existed in the minds of but few. Every Jew would certainly suppose, as the rite administered by John bore the same name as the rites of Moses, and like them referred to purity of mind, that it had in every respect the same character, and was to be administered in the same way. The multitudes who came to hear John, and to be baptized by him, immediately he commenced his ministry, had most of them been baptized by the priests, when they went to offer sacrifice at the temple, and on other occasions prescribed by the law. As the priests had never required of them the proof, or the profession, of being morally purified, before they administered their ceremonial purification, it could not be imagined by any, that such proof, or profession, would be required by John. They knew that all



the purifications of the law were given, not to those who had obtained a religious improvement, of which they were conscious, and the evidence of which could be exhibited to others, but to those who merely professed to seek it, and who made even this profession simply as it was the meaning of every public religious action. All the baptisms they had hitherto received or witnessed, were emblems of purity to be acquired, and not signs of purity already attained; they were memorials of privileges to be used, and of duties to be performed, and never marks of superior excellence, by which the person baptized was distinguished from his countrymen. Many of them had seen the rite of baptism, together with other initiatory ceremonies, administered to Gentiles, not only to Gentiles of recognized piety, (for of such a qualification the laws for the reception of foreigners to Jewish privileges made no mention,) but, at least, to those also whose character was similar to that of the Jews in general. They could not expect that a condition would be requisite for the baptism of John, which was never required for the baptism of proselytes to Judaism. It is not pretended that the anticipations, which the Jews must necessarily have formed, respecting the character of John's baptism, from their knowledge of the legal baptisms, prove alone that the nature of both was the same, but it must be admitted to render it probable, and, indeed, certain, if no adverse evidence be furnished by the pages of the New Testament. It is not by our notions of fitness and utility that we are to judge of the probable character of any religious rite, but by the known character of similar rites of Divine appointment. The fact, that all the sacred rites with which from childhood they had been familiar, and which had been from the time of their appointment observed by their nation for many hundred years, were of the character we have described, must have made it highly probable to the Jews, and makes it equally probable to us, that the rite administered by John was of the same nature,—that it was designed for all, and not for a few, that it indicated a duty which was obligatory on all, a privilege which was proffered to all; and that it was not the sign of a superior excellence, the peculiar possession of comparatively a small number.

2. Whatever weight belongs to the apparent fitness and utility of the character, which may be assigned to a religious ceremony, is opposed to the supposition, that the baptism of John was a *sign* and *profession* of repentance, as a *fact*, and is in favour of the supposition, that it was merely an *emblem* and *acknowledgment* of repentance, as a *duty*. For in the former case, there would be much danger of self-deception; in the latter, there would be none. On the one supposition, an initiatory ordinance would indicate an ascertained progress in a new course of life; in the other, a professed willingness to commence. If baptism were the sign of purity already attained, then the making such a profession, and the receiving such an attestation, would generally tend to foster self-



complacency; but if it were an emblem of purity to be sought, then by embodying in an public act the resolution to pursue it, this resolution would be greatly confirmed.

It could not be right for a person to observe any service appropriate only to those who had experienced a change of mind, and consequently denoting their peculiar character, unless they had opportunity for self-examination and trial; nor for others to participate in such service, unless they had the means of judging if that which was professed was real. But a service that denoted only the claims of God, the duty he required, and the blessing he promised, would be appropriate to all. Nothing more than the avowal of a present resolution to live in the manner required, could be understood as involved in the reception of such a rite. Of the sincerity of this profession, each person must be himself fully conscious, and others would express no opinion. The administrator would not be constituted a judge of the hearts of his fellow men; he would not express his approbation, by giving to the professed penitent a mark which true converts only should receive: he would merely, as a servant of God, by administering this rite, bear clear and impressive testimony to the requirements and promises of his Lord.

3. The statement of John concerning his baptism, shows that it referred to the future, and not to the past; to what was to be, and not to what had been experienced. To the people who came to him, he said, "I purify you with water *for* repentance." Ἐγὼ μὲν βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν, Matt. iii. 11. These words indicate, that the repentance mentioned was the future object of the purification, and not the past reason for its performance. When our Lord said, that his blood was shed "*for* the remission of sins," εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν,\* he taught his disciples, that he died in order that their sins might be forgiven, and not because they were already forgiven. When he directed them to eat bread and drink wine *for* the remembrance of himself, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν,† he bade them do this as a means to secure a due remembrance of him after his death, and not because he had been remembered while he was with them. So when John declared, that he purified with water *for* repentance, he stated, that he thus purified in order that men might be brought to repentance, and not because they had repented. His object was to teach men their duty, and not to attest the performance of it. By what he did before the eyes of men, as well as by what he addressed to their hearing, he inculcated the necessity of repentance; thus exhibiting the moral preparation needed for the kingdom of Christ, without pretending to determine who were worthy, or distinguishing them from others, by the sign of his baptism. This declaration of John is sufficient to prove, that the nature of his

\* Matt. xxvi. 28.

† Luke xxii. 19.

baptism was similar to that of the Jewish rites, being prospective and not retrospective, hortatory and not attestatory.\*

4. The persons baptized by John render it evident that the service was designed for all, and not merely for those who were truly penitent. Whatever allowance may be justly due to general and hyperbolic language, the statements, that *all the people were baptized*, and that *the whole population of Jerusalem, Judea, and the country adjacent to the Jordan was baptized*, must denote that the number baptized by John was very great, when compared with that of all the inhabitants of those regions. Now he could not but know, that of those vast multitudes who flocked to his station, if some were influenced by motives of piety, many more were influenced by curiosity, by the hope of worldly advantage, and by sympathy with a popular excitement. No person acquainted with human nature would expect in such assemblies more than a few real penitents. If the baptism of John was intended only for those who had repented, and all besides who received it profaned a sacred rite, to baptize these multitudes would be to participate in their sin, and to confirm their delusion. It is said, that the people were baptized confessing their sins; but do most of those who acknowledge that they have done wrong, "cease to do evil and learn to do well?" By purifying these persons with water, John acknowledged nothing in respect to them but the truth of this confession; and, doubtless, they all were sinners. But it is no where said that they were baptized, professing that they had repented. He could not, therefore, by baptizing them, acknowledge the truth of this imaginary profession. We have every reason to believe that few had really repented. When some of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to be baptized, he did not reject them, he did not say that his baptism was not for them, that they were first to repent, and then to be baptized. He merely warned them that they were not seeking salvation in the right way, and admonished them that it was not by external purifications, nor by natural descent, that they could obtain the favour of God; but by purity of heart and life. "Who hath taught you to flee from the approaching punishment? Bring forth fruit suitable to repentance."—Matt. iii. 7. After describing their character in terms expressive of his conviction of their utter hypocrisy and wickedness, he yet refers to them in common with others as the subjects of the rite which he administered. "O generation of vipers."—v. 7. "I baptize you with water for repentance."—v. 11. In the 12th verse he intimates his expectation, that though all were baptized by him with water, some only would be

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\* The phrase ἐν μετάνοιᾳ ὑμῶν, instead of εἰς μετάνοιαν, would denote that repentance was the condition of baptism. "I purify you with water on account of your repentance." So it is said, the shepherds praised God on account of all they heard and saw, ἐν πίστι, &c. Luke ii. 20.

the wheat to be gathered into the barn, while others would be the chaff to be consumed by fire.

5. No condition of baptism is ever mentioned.

If the Jews had been unacquainted with any rites likely to influence their judgment concerning the baptism of John, or even if in these rites certain spiritual qualifications were antecedently necessary to their lawful performance, we should still expect that such qualifications, if required by his baptism, would be often stated and strongly inculcated. He would not leave them to infer that because a spiritual purification had been required for other external purifications, it was also required for his; since the Jews of that day were especially prone to disregard what was moral, in attending to what was ceremonial. But, inasmuch as in not one of all the many baptisms of the law was spiritual purity demanded as the condition of its observance, it was the more necessary, if repentance was the condition of his baptism, that this should be distinctly and frequently enjoined as the preparation for its observance. Yet there is not a single statement of this kind, nor even the faintest allusion. The people were told what they should be and do, after they were baptized; but not a word is recorded of any thing said to them respecting what they should be or do before they were baptized. He addressed them, not as persons whose course of life had been changed before they came to be baptized; but as those who, after leaving him, were to commence a new course of life. When some asked him, "What shall we do?" he answered, "He that hath two garments, let him give one to him who has none; and let him who has provisions act in the same way." To the tax-gatherers he said, "Exact no more than is prescribed to you." And to the soldiers, "Do not by violence injure any, nor bear false testimony, and be content with your wages." If the baptism of John had been designed for any class of persons, would they not have been described? Had any condition, such as repentance, been required, would it not have been mentioned? Since no description is given of the proper subjects of baptism, we infer that it was for all. As no condition is mentioned, we infer that none was required. What was said, and what was not said, coincide to prove, that the baptism of John was not the sign of a change of mind already experienced by a few, but the emblem of what was henceforth confessedly obligatory on all.

6. There does not appear to have been any examination of the candidates for baptism, in respect to their knowledge of religion, their purposes, or their experience. If any such examination did take place, then, since this would be a striking point of difference between the baptism of John and the ordinary Jewish baptism, it is scarcely possible that it could pass altogether without mention. But not one question of this kind is related as proposed to the persons hitherto ignorant, supersti-

tious, and profligate, who we are expressly told went to be baptized by him, and were baptized.\* No reproach was incurred by those who received this baptism; for not they who honoured it, but they who dishonoured it, were exposed to persecution.† The natural excitement of feeling which ever accompanies the movement of multitudes; and the wild expectations which at that time induced hundreds and thousands to flock to every new standard that was lifted up in the city or in the desert, would carry along crowds of mistaken, thoughtless, and wicked persons to this baptism.‡ What is related of the addresses of John to these multitudes, was fitted to instruct the ignorant, to alarm the careless, and to turn sinners to repentance. But nothing appears to have been said or done by him with the design of separating, in the assemblies by which day after day he was surrounded, the good from the bad. The general duties and promises, of which the rite of baptism was emblematical, were exhibited by the baptism of the impenitent, not less than by the baptism of the penitent. The Divine authority of John's mission, and the obligation of the repentance which he inculcated, were acknowledged alike by all who received his baptism. Where this acknowledgment was sincerely made, it would be beneficial to those who made it, and, whether sincerely or insincerely made, it was a testimony to the truth which would tend to the benefit of others. The sincerity of the act was the exclusive concern of each individual; it could be known only to his own conscience, and to Him who searcheth the hearts of the children of men. To a baptism of the penitent, conferred on account of their repentance, personal examinations are absolutely necessary. To a baptism of all, performed to inculcate repentance, they are unnecessary.

7. The short space of time during which persons continued in attendance on the ministry of John, and the absence, during that period, of all occasions for the ordinary duties and temptations of life, must have rendered it impossible for those who were affected by his preaching, to know whether they were really penitent or not. The words used by John to express the duty which he enjoined are *μετάνοια* and *μετανοέω*, and these words in the New Testament always express reformation, an improvement of character, a change of mind for the better; and they are not used for a single state of feeling, or a present resolution. That they denote, in the addresses of John, that deep and thorough alteration of mind which issues in an entire change of conduct, is evident from the connexion of repentance with forgiveness. It is not to those who regret the past that pardon is promised, for regret is not repentance; it may lead to it, but it does not always. There is

\* Matt. xxi. 32. Luke vii. 29.

† "If we should say it was from men, all the people will stone us. For they are persuaded that John was a prophet."—Luke xx. 6.

‡ Acts v. 36, 37.

a sorrow which produces a repentance never regretted (*μετάνοιαν ἀμεταμέλητον*); and there is a sorrow which ends in death. Instances innumerable are constantly occurring, of persons, under the influence of suffering and fear, of eloquence and sympathy, lamenting their former sins, and resolving to amend; but these lamentations and resolves leave their hearts and lives unchanged. Their goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. It is not from every resolution to amend, by whatever motive excited, and under whatever circumstances formed, that a reformation of mind and conduct can be expected to ensue; but only from resolutions excited by such motives, and formed under such circumstances, as show that the change of purpose results from a partial, and tends to a complete, change of character. To such resolutions, the promise of grace necessary to render them effectual is given, and to such only. Of the multitudes baptized by John, we have every reason to believe, that many did not even regret their past sins, nor purpose forsaking them; that many more had merely those transient sentiments of sorrow, and those vague and partial resolutions of amendment, which were not likely to lead to any reformation; and the rest were, by the circumstances in which they were placed, prevented from knowing what was the real nature of the change which the preaching of John had produced in their minds. How unreasonable, then, is the supposition, that all these people were required or permitted to make profession of a change, which few had experienced, and of which none, to whom the change was recent, could exhibit or possess satisfactory evidence.

We have thus seen that the analogy of Jewish baptisms, the apparent fitness and utility of the institution, the description given by John himself of its character, the persons baptized by him, the absence of any requirements preparatory to the rite, of any examination, or any opportunity for the trial of principle, all conduct us to the same conclusion. They all prove that the baptism of John was not designed for those only who had repented. It was not administered to any because they had repented, or because they were supposed to have repented, or because they professed to have repented. There is no evidence to show that there was either the fact, or the belief, or the profession, of repentance, in the New Testament signification of the word; but the contrary. Consequently, the baptism of John was not a sign of repentance. It exhibited symbolically, that which his preaching exhibited verbally. Both the purification and the preaching were directed to the same end. As well may we suppose, that he preached only to the penitent, and that they only were worthy to hear his words, as that he baptized only the penitent, and that they only were worthy to receive his purification.

II. It is unnecessary to attempt to prove that no spiritual change was produced in the minds of those who received this rite, unless they

were influenced by its character, as an exhibition of truth, an occasion for obedience, and an acknowledgment of hope and duty. In these ways it might be, and without doubt was, the means of much good. But that any præternatural virtue was associated with the waters of Enon and Jordan, is a supposition unsupported by the slightest evidence, and consigned to merited contempt. There was nothing in the nature of the service to indicate such efficacy, no promise that it would be, nor statement that it was, experienced. On the contrary, the preaching of John was obviously designed to prevent any from trusting to his baptism, as though they were to be changed thereby. He called on all to repent, and directed them to that Saviour who, *by his Spirit*, would purify and save all who trusted to him. The declarations of the evangelists assure us, that those baptized by John, in general, continued unchanged in character, for by nearly all of them Christ was rejected. As some, in most pagan countries, have imagined that the water of their lustrations would cleanse the soul and propitiate their gods; so, from the testimony of Philo, Josephus, and later Jewish writers, it is evident that some imagined that the ceremonial purifications of the law, and John's purification with water, purified the soul, and made it acceptable to God. Never was any superstitious notion or practice more destitute of all claim on our respect than this. The opinion, that either the purification of John, or Jewish baptisms, or heathen lustrations, were able to purify the soul of man, or propitiate his Maker, has been condemned by the wiser heathens and Jews, and by all classes of Christians in every age and country. It received no support from the testimony of heaven, or the experience of earth; and is universally regarded as a childish and degrading superstition, alien from the ways of God, and incongruous to the nature of man.

III. That the baptism of John was an emblem of moral and spiritual purity, a general symbol of the state of mind which ought to be possessed, must now be evident. This we have seen was the meaning of the similar Jewish rites, and, on this account alone, as there is no evidence for any other signification, we are justified in our belief, that it was also the meaning of John's baptism. He administered an external purification with water, and taught the necessity of the purification of the soul by repentance, and by the Spirit of Christ. "I purify you with water for repentance." "He preached the purification of repentance for the remission of sins." "I purify you with water—He will purify you with a sacred influence." The purification of the body as a fact, thus associated with the purification of the soul as a duty, and a promise, could only be emblematical. It formed a part of that system of instruction by sensible signs, which, on account of its adaptation to impress the minds of men, was adopted to so great an extent under the old dispensation; and, though much diminished, is still retained under the new.



From this examination it appears, that the baptism of John was not intended only for a class of persons, for those who were already purified by repentance; and that it was not so administered as to distinguish this class from others, and become a sign of the peculiar excellence possessed by them; but that it was designed for all. We have seen, that it was not the means of reforming the character, except as an exhibition of truth, and an expression of submission and confidence. Only so far as it was thus the means of leading men to true repentance, could it change their relation to God, and render them the objects of his favour. It was a distinct and impressive emblem of the duty required, and the grace promised by God. They who received the baptism of John, thereby acknowledged his Divine mission; for he administered this purification, as one sent by God, to announce the approach of Christ, and to prepare the way before him.—John i. 33. They also acknowledged the duty of repentance, since this was the great subject of his exhortation; and expressed their belief in the coming of Christ, for this was the object to which he directed all their hopes. But they made no profession of having forsaken their sins, of having experienced that change of mind to which forgiveness was promised, and which was described as a necessary and sufficient preparation for the Saviour's kingdom. Of their sincerity, John was not required to be the judge. The public acknowledgment of truth and duty, was a motive to repentance, and did, no doubt, confirm the faith and strengthen the resolutions of many. If it is desirable that truth and duty should be acknowledged by the impenitent in words, though some may abuse this acknowledgment, and many fail to profit thereby; for the same reasons it is desirable, that truth and duty should be acknowledged by some outward act, such as the reception of the baptism of John.

Having seen the kind and degree of evidence afforded by the sacred Scriptures, in reference to the nature and proper subjects of the Jewish purifications, and of the purification of John; we can now, with more correctness, consider the evidence they present in respect to Christian baptism; and judge whether the facts and statements of the New Testament accord best with the doctrine, that this purification with water was of a nature similar to those by which it was preceded, or was altogether and essentially different.\*

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\* The testimony of Josephus, already referred to, accords with the conclusions drawn from the sacred writers. The baptism of John must have been superstitiously regarded by some as having a supernatural spiritual efficacy, or he would not have mentioned, that John himself taught that it was not to be used as an apology for sins. That it was simply a means of instruction, appears from his declaration—that the soul was purified by integrity. The number and miscellaneous character of his followers, are evident from the statement of the historian, that John was imprisoned by Herod, because the multitudes who flocked to him were so excited, that he apprehended an insurrection might be the issue of this popular movement.—Lib. xviii., cap. 6.



REPLY OF W. S. TO MR. CONDER'S "FURTHER  
REMARKS ON COLOSSIANS II. 16, 17."

DEAR SIR,—In replying to your—"Further Remarks"—on a passage in the Epistle to the Colossians, of which I have lately offered an exposition,\* I beg leave to address you personally; because I am anxious that our discussion should be conducted in a friendly and Christian temper, to the exclusion of those acrimonious and uncharitable feelings which so often disgrace controversies of this kind, and which are not only inconsistent with a just regard for divine truth, but also extremely unfavourable to its reception and influence. On this ground I am afraid I have some reason to complain of you; since, without adducing any sufficient proof of your allegations, you have accused me of promulgating—"rash, dogmatical, and flimsy criticisms;"—of making—"various unsupported and erroneous assertions; . . . of labouring under an obliquity of judgment, which incapacitates me for reasoning on the subject,"—of endeavouring—"to prove that the Ten Commandments have been annulled; . . . of representing St. Paul as having made void the law;"—and, finally, of—"loosening the bonds of Christian morality."—Now, Sir, although I am willing to make allowance for your having written, as you intimate, in a hurry, and under painful feelings, I think you will, on reflection, regret having given utterance to accusations which many of our readers are likely to mistake for facts; and will perceive that, had you waited till you were somewhat cooler, and more at leisure, you would probably have done greater justice both to yourself, and to me. Instead of retaliating, according to the usual custom, in a similar style, I shall treat you with all the respect due to your character, as a man of learning, piety, and talent, and the author of several useful works, but shall examine your opinions with the utmost freedom consistent with fair criticism, and good manners. For my own I do not claim the slightest regard, any farther than they are found to be supported by satisfactory evidence; but when, after much deliberation, they seem to me substantiated, I cannot allow myself to speak of them in a tone of diffidence and indecision at variance with my real sentiments. If the opposite mode of conduct exposes me to the charge of dogmatism, I must submit to the imputation, although I do not consider it deserved.

Before proceeding with my reply, I wish to make some general remarks, which may have a tendency to allay animosity, and dispose our minds to a more calm and amicable investigation of the subject.

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\* See Congregational Magazine for March, May, and August, 1842; pp. 152—158 310—318; 527—534; also for October, 1841; pp. 705, 706.

I would, in the first place, observe that doubts concerning the divine authority under the present dispensation of the Sabbath, whether the Jewish, or the Christian, need not excite much indignation or alarm, since they are neither new, popular, nor necessarily irreligious. They were entertained by several of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, and have been adopted by many other persons of piety and intelligence down to the present day; and, admitting for the sake of argument that they were well-founded, it would probably be very long before they were embraced by the great body of professing Christians; who, with regard to this and similar matters, are far more inclined to follow the guidance of custom, or tradition, than to trouble themselves with theological discussions.—Secondly,—supposing this opinion were universally prevalent, it need not occasion any material alteration in the present arrangements respecting public worship.—“If,”—as you allege,—“a Sabbath is necessary to the preservation of religion in the world. . . . if it is one of the greatest possible blessings bestowed upon man. . . . and if a delight in its sacred observances is a mark of true piety,” &c.,—there is no reason why it should not be as zealously maintained on the voluntary principle, as on the ground of divine command. Hitherto, that command, whether real or imaginary, has not been very successful amongst communities professedly Christian, in securing the desired effect, but on the contrary has often provoked opposition, and is usually most influential with those who have the least occasion for it. To admit the abrogation of the command, by no means, therefore, implies the abandonment of the practice.—Thirdly,—Christians of consistent sentiments and conduct who differ on this point should, in obedience to the directions of the apostle Paul, abstain from angry contention, and mutual reproach, and treat each other with forbearance, and brotherly kindness. He who considers the Sabbath divinely ordained should not on that account be ridiculed, as weak and superstitious; neither should he who thinks otherwise be represented as deficient in piety, making void the law, or loosening the bonds of Christian morality. Notwithstanding the difference of their views in this respect, both parties may on the first day of the week cordially unite in the same religious services, with the pleasing assurance that, if properly performed, these services, whether commanded or not, cannot fail to be acceptable to God, and beneficial to themselves.

Having thus endeavoured to simplify the controversy, and to prepare our minds for a candid consideration of the scriptural testimony by which it must be ultimately decided, let us now review what you term—“the much perverted passage”—in the Epistle to the Colossians, which has occasioned its revival at the present time. But first, allow me to ask, by whom has this passage been perverted? You will scarcely say by me; since my exposition of it substantially agrees with the authorized English version, and with all other versions ancient and

modern with which I am acquainted. Are all these versions incorrect, as well as the interpretation of your worthy predecessor, Philonomos, which differs from them? Such seems to be your opinion, since you virtually reject them all, and propose a version which, whatever may be its merits in other respects, has certainly that of being new. That we may be the better qualified to judge of this matter, let the whole be fairly restated.

The original passage is,—“Μή, οὖν, τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω ἐν βρώσει, ἢ ἐν πόσει, ἢ ἐν μέρει ἑορτῆς, ἢ νουμηνίας, ἢ σαββάτων, ἃ ἐστὶ σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων, τὸ δὲ σῶμα Χριστοῦ.”

The authorized version.—“Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.”

The version proposed by me.—“Let no one, therefore, judge you in reference to food or drink, nor in respect of festivals, nor of days of new moon, nor of Sabbath-days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance [is] of Christ.”

The version proposed by Philonomos.—“Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which are shadows of the things to come, but the body is Christ's.”

By Sabbaths Philonomos supposes the apostle to mean, either—“the days of the week,”—or—“the periodical solemnities of the passover, pentecost, &c.”

The version proposed by yourself.—“Let no man judge (or condemn) you in meat, or in drink; either in respect of a festival, or of a new moon, or of Sabbaths,” &c.;—or, as it might be more clearly stated, agreeably to your own explanation,—“Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink; *whether* in respect of a festival, or of a new moon, or of Sabbaths,” &c.

On the comparative merits of these versions every reader must judge for himself; but, to my mind, dear Sir, yours seems to be at variance, both with the meaning of the terms, and with the circumstances of the case.—“The passage is,”—you say,—“strictly parallel with that in Romans xiv.” [1—6.]—To a certain extent it is so, and in both the apostle is speaking of two classes of ritual observances; namely,—distinctions of food and drink,—and distinctions of time. In reference to the former class he remarks to the Gentile Christians at Rome,—Verses 2—4, “One man believeth that he may eat all things, whilst he that is weak eateth vegetables [only.] Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath accepted him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be sustained, for God is able to sustain him.”—In respect to the latter

class he observes;—Verses 5, 6, “One man esteemeth one day above another, another man esteemeth every day [alike.] Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regardeth it to the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.”—In the conclusion of Verse 6, the apostle resumes his notice of the first class of observances, for the purpose of showing that it stands on precisely the same ground as the second.—“He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and [equally] giveth God thanks.”—Although they may sometimes happen to coincide, these two classes are essentially distinct, and in both passages are so represented; yet in both you endeavour, without any just reason, to reduce them to one.—“The leading idea,”—you say,—“relates, not to the observance of days, but to the subject of meat and drink, that is to ritual observances connected with eating and drinking. . . . As in addressing the Romans, [xiv. 1—6,] so here, [Coloss. ii. 16, 17,] the apostle connects the question of the lawfulness of eating and drinking with the observance of sacred days. And so close is the apparent connexion that Koppe explains it by saying,—‘Some believed that it was their duty to abstain only on certain days from eating flesh.’—That the observance of certain days, as fast-days or fast-days, in respect of food, is chiefly, if not exclusively referred to, can scarcely be doubted.”—According to your interpretation this passage, therefore, merely signifies that the Colossian Christians were exempted from the obligation of feasting or fasting on the Jewish solemnities therein specified, although the Mosaic law does not command feasting on all these solemnities, nor fasting on any of them; so that, if this was really his meaning, the apostle’s declaration was not a little superfluous.

You support so singular an exposition by a mode of criticism equally extraordinary.—“This construction of the passage in the Epistle to the Colossians is,”—you say,—“confirmed by the way in which—*ἐν μέρει*—is brought in, not immediately after the verb, its natural place according to the view commonly taken of the import of the admonition, but, as if introducing a clause exegetical of the preceding words,—‘Let no man judge (or condemn) you in meat, or in drink, either in respect of a festival, or of a new moon, or of Sabbaths.’—There seems no reason why the words,—‘*in respect of*,’—should have been interposed at all, unless the—‘meat and drink’—had respect to the ritual observances on such days.”—Let us examine this reasoning. By—“the view commonly taken of the import of the admonition,”—you mean, I presume, your own view, namely,—“that the leading idea relates to ritual observances connected with eating and drinking.”—In conformity with this view, the natural place of the phrase—“*ἐν μέρει*,—in respect of,”—should, you say, have been immediately after the verb—“*κρινέτω*,—Let no one, therefore, judge you.”—But it could not be transferred to

that place without changing the case of—"βρώσει and πόσει,—food and drink,"—from the ablative to the genitive. Now, as the phrase does not, and could not occupy that place, without improperly altering the whole structure of the sentence, the reasonable inference is that—"the view commonly taken"—is incorrect. To avoid this conclusion, you have another expedient, not inferior to the former one; for you maintain that the phrase, as it now stands,—“introduces a clause exegetical of the preceding words.”—But this, allow me to say, is impossible; for the conjunction—*ἥ*,—with which it is connected, is not exegetical, or explanatory, but distinctive, and the addition to it in this place of—*ἐν μέλει*—makes the distinction still stronger; so that, instead of there being, as you contend,—“no reason why the words—‘in respect of’—should have been interposed at all, unless the—‘meat and drink’—had respect to the ritual observances on such days,”—the words are absolutely incompatible with such an application, unless, by another unwarrantable alteration of the text, the conjunction—*ἥ*, nor,—were exchanged for—*εἴτε*, whether;—whilst, on the other supposition, there is an obvious and very sufficient reason for their introduction, namely, to distinguish between the two classes of observances above noticed,—those relating to food and drink on the one hand, and those relating to days or seasons on the other. After all this ingenious contrivance, you have so little confidence in your own interpretation, that you actually hesitate in proposing it, and I have accordingly been under the necessity, in collating it with the others, of substituting the term—"whether,"—which you intend, for the term—"either,"—which you express. I will not imitate your example by using harsh language, but shall merely remark that if I had dealt in criticism of this description, and you had termed it—"rash, dogmatical, and flimsy,"—I should have had no just ground of complaint. You labour, however, to strengthen your position by quoting several passages from the Old Testament, and conclude with the following question.—“On comparing the apostle’s language with these passages, can there remain a reasonable doubt upon the mind of any reader that he alludes to ceremonial observances upon the sabbatical and other festivals, which belonged to the Levitical institutes, not to the observance of the Sabbath itself?”—Here you again hesitate in announcing your own conclusions. The last clause of this question should have been,—“not to the observance of the festivals themselves?”—for, in the text under consideration, as well as in those which you have adduced from the Old Testament, the annual festivals, the days of new moon, and the Sabbath-days are inseparably conjoined, and must all stand or fall together. You make a desperate effort to infer—"that, when we find Sabbaths spoken of in immediate connexion with new moons, and other set feasts, THE SABBATH cannot be intended, but only certain ritual (it may be weekly) observances,"—but this merely shows that you find the testimony of Scripture to

be decidedly against you, and would gladly, were it possible, be relieved from it.

Let us now hear the conclusion of the whole matter. By a mode of exposition at variance with the rules of the Greek language, and objectionable in other respects, you have found the meaning of the apostle Paul in this passage to be that the Gentile Christians at Colosse, and elsewhere, were exempted from joining in the sacrifices and other ceremonial observances connected with the annual festivals of the Jews, with their days of new moon, and with their Sabbath-days, but not from the observance of the festivals themselves. For, the reservation which you make in favour of the Sabbath necessarily extends to the other festivals associated with it, and you are consequently reduced to the dilemma, either of admitting that these latter festivals were binding on Gentile Christians, or that the Jewish Sabbath was not. The first part of your exposition is superfluous; for Gentile Christians had obviously no need to be apprized that they were not bound to participate in sacrifices which could be performed only by Jews, in the temple at Jerusalem; and the second part is erroneous, since they had long before been assured by the apostolical council held in that city, that from the whole ceremonial law, with a few slight and specified exceptions, they were absolutely free. (See Acts xv. 22—29.) It is true you have ventured to modify the terms of the apostolical decree, by omitting the allusion to fornication, and inserting your favourite Sabbath; for—"if,"—say you,—“it was deemed necessary to lay restrictions upon the Gentiles of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, in respect to the partaking of things strangled, and from blood, and from things offered to idols, [add also,—and from fornication,] in order to avoid giving offence to their Jewish brethren, [?] the same principle would require an observance of the seventh day,” &c.—I presume, however, that all sober-minded persons, including yourself, on further consideration, will prefer the actual wording of the original document, which informed Gentile Christians universally that, in reference to the law of Moses, no greater burden was laid upon them than that they should abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; and that, if they observed these restrictions, they would do well.—Such then, when fully developed, and plainly expressed, is your interpretation of this passage, an interpretation, of the truth of which you imagine no reader can entertain a reasonable doubt; but which I, on the contrary, question whether any reader competent to judge can be persuaded to adopt, more especially as it is not only new, but evidently got up for the occasion.

Allow me now to restate my interpretation; or, I should rather say, the natural import of the text, whether taken in its original language, or in any approved version. It is simply this, that, dreading the influence of Jewish, or Judaizing emissaries, who from the earliest period



of the gospel were exceedingly active and successful in adulterating Christianity with the doctrines and practices of Judaism, as by themselves explained and administered, the apostle Paul, then a prisoner at Rome, wrote to the Colossian and other Gentile churches, exhorting them to reject the proposals of those false and dangerous teachers; and, as a powerful motive to this effect, reminded them that, with the few exceptions above noticed, they were delivered by their Christian profession from all the observances of the Jewish ceremonial law, whether the distinctions of food and drink peculiar to that dispensation, or its sacred seasons; namely, the annual festivals, the days of new moon, and the Sabbath-days.—I really do not see how you, or any other qualified person, can deny this to be a fair representation of the passage under discussion. One of your principal objections seems to be, that you cannot understand—"in what sense festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths were a shadow or type of future things."—But, as this is positively affirmed by the apostle, we ought to admit the statement, whether we fully understand it or not. And here, dear Sir, allow me in a friendly manner to suggest that you would do well to treat the Scriptures generally with greater deference and submission, and not to arraign them, as you repeatedly do in the course of these remarks, at the bar of your own judgment. The apostle declares the Jewish Sabbath, in common with other ritual observances of the Mosaic law, to be a shadow of things to come; and you object that the assertion—"appears irreconcilable with common sense."—He assures Gentile Christians that by the gospel they were exempted from observing the Jewish annual festivals, days of new moon, and sabbaths; and you maintain,—“that such a precept [as the institution of the Jewish Sabbath] should have been repealed by our Lord, or his apostles, is a supposition revolting to reason and piety;”—and that,—“unless the fourth commandment had partaken of the same universal and permanent character, understood in its true import, as the rest, it would be impossible to reconcile with the Divine wisdom its insertion in the Decalogue.”—This is not, I beg to say, the frame of mind in which the inspired oracles should be consulted. I will not retort on you your own charge of making—"rash, dogmatical, and unsupported assertions;"—but, if the apostle Paul were now present, would he not be justified in saying,—“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?”—You have yourself, however, suggested the true explanation of the statement,—“which are a shadow of things to come,”—yet reject it, in consequence of misapprehending, as I think, the meaning of the concluding clause,—“but the substance [is] of Christ;”—in other words,—Christ supplies the substance, whilst the Jewish institutions were merely a shadow, of the sabbatism reserved for his people, that state of perfect friendship and communion with God, which they will ultimately realize in heaven; where, not on one day of the week only, but—"day and night they will serve him in



his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne will dwell among them."—Rev. vii. 15. In like manner, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle represents the heavenly rest, or state of final felicity, as typified both by the seventh-day Sabbath, and by the land of Canaan ;—the one illustration borrowed from time, the other from space. This view is confirmed by Dr. Jennings, in his—"Jewish Antiquities,"—when treating of the Sabbath.—"The Jews," says he, "accounted this holy day to be a type of the heavenly rest. On this notion the apostle evidently grounds his discourse in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Verses 1—11. Origen makes the Sabbath an emblem of that rest we shall enjoy when we have done our work, so as to have left nothing undone which was our incumbent duty. In the same manner the Jewish doctors speak of the Sabbath. It was a common proverb among them,—" *Non datum est sabbatum, nisi ut esset typus futuri seculi,*" &c.\*—The Sabbath was given for no other end than to be a type of the future age; and it was, accordingly, a tradition of the Jews that, when the Messiah came, he would abolish the Sabbath.—Whether the seventh-day Sabbath, thus explained, might not have been as truly and naturally a type or shadow of the heavenly sabbatism as the distinctions of food and drink prescribed under the same dispensation, and which you readily acknowledge to be such, or whether—"such an interpretation of the apostle's language still appears irreconcilable with common sense,"—I leave you, on further consideration, to determine.

After so much animosity and opposition it is not a little strange that, in the latter part of your remarks, you adopt a view of the matter nearly, if not entirely identical with my own.—"In point of fact,"—you say,—"Christianity has substituted, not by express command, but as the result of the religious observance of the first day of the week by the apostles and primitive Christians, the Sunday for the seventh-day, as the Christian Sabbath."—Now, if Christianity has really done this, the Jewish Sabbath must of course be abrogated, for it cannot be at the same time superseded and in force; and, if the Christian Sabbath has not been established by express command, it must stand on the ground of human consent, which is precisely what I maintain. With singular inconsistency you, however, immediately add,—"The only question is whether it has consequently annulled the fourth commandment, and repealed the moral obligation to allow to all who live by their toil a day of rest."—How after making such an admission you could propose such a question, it is difficult to conceive; since the Sabbath appointed by the fourth commandment is the very seventh-day Sabbath for which Christianity has, you say, substituted the first-day Sabbath. You ask for an express repeal of the former, and the apostle Paul answers you, in reference at least to Gentile Christians;—"Let no one judge you

\* Rev. David Jennings, D.D., *Jewish Antiquities*, &c. 8vo. London. 1837. p 387.

.... in respect of festivals, nor of days of new moon, nor of Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance [is] of Christ."—Notwithstanding this assurance, you contend that the Sabbath is still divinely commanded, that the general principle is equally maintained by the Christian, as by the Jewish Sabbath, and that the mere change of the day was authorized by the apostolical practice of observing the first as a day of religious commemoration; or, if not, was a venial mistake! Of the supposed mistake nothing need be said. Of the apostolical practice there is no satisfactory proof; and, if there were, it would not be equivalent to an express command, which you acknowledge to be wanting; for the same apostle declares that those Christians who regard one day above another, and those who regard every day alike, may be equally conscientious, and equally acceptable to their common Lord; a statement which, taken in conjunction with his subsequent exhortation,—“Let every one be well persuaded in his own mind,”—decidedly proves that there was not at that time any rule or command on the subject. On this, as on other occasions, you, indeed, venture to contradict the apostle, and intimate that—“those who disregard the day [even] to the Lord, are loosening the bonds of Christian morality,”—and incurring the displeasure of Christ; but I hope you will be induced to abandon this objectionable practice, and that, when the question is found to lie between human and divine authority, our readers will know which to prefer.

That I may not, however, intrude too long on their patience, or on yours, I shall reserve what further remains to be said on this subject for a second letter; with which, as far as I am concerned, I wish this discussion to close. I shall now merely add that, although I consider the Christian Sabbath to be essentially a voluntary institution, I neither disregard it myself, nor teach others to do so; and that my principal object is to ascertain and observe the scriptural rule in this matter, without addition or subtraction.

I am, DEAR SIR, yours respectfully,

20, Great Coram Street,  
London, August 17th, 1842.

WILLIAM STROUD, M.D.

#### ON THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

THE worship of God is the obvious duty of every intelligent creature. To the good man it is the most delightful of all exercises. It exerts a salutary influence on the heart and character, whilst it elevates and soothes the mind. It is enforced by the highest authority; it is recommended by the best examples; it is encouraged by the surest promises. It is God communing with man, as man himself rises to fellowship with God. Reader, are you living in the worship of God?

To the right discharge of this duty, *correct, distinct, and vivid conceptions* of the BEING we worship must be of great importance. We purpose to make this the subject of the present paper.

It is true that we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection; but it is equally true that we cannot worship an unknown God. Nor are we required. He has revealed to us in his works and in his word all that is necessary; and whatever *may* be known respecting him, *must* be diligently sought after, if we would present an intelligent and acceptable offering. As far as our views are erroneous our service will be defective;—nor will it be god that we shall worship.

But the difficulty that we feel in communion with God, sometimes arises from the *obscurity and indistinctness* of our conceptions of him, *at the hour of worship*. We do not take pains to set him before us. We bend the knee and venture to address him, without any previous effort to realize his presence, to apprehend his glory, or to obtain lively impressions of any of those attributes by which he has revealed himself to us. Accordingly, our thoughts are confused and our words unsuitable; and we retire from the exercise dissatisfied with ourselves, and ashamed of our performance.

Christian reader, try another method; and before you venture to approach the heart-searching God, endeavour to get *distinct and accurate views of the GREAT OBJECT of adoration*.

Meditate seriously on such passages as these. "I am the Lord thy God, the HOLY ONE of Israel, thy Saviour." "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Ponder the following sublime and impressive, though uninspired representation. "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." Occasionally pause, and let your mind dwell on each term in the sentence. God is a spirit—infinite—eternal, &c.—then bend before him.

But as a preparation for the worship of God, it is especially desirable that we should understand and acknowledge *his relations to us*. To think of him as the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, upholding all things by the word of his power, cannot but give enlargement and solemnity to the mind; but it is the vivid conception of his intimate connexion with *us*, that prepares us to present to him the worship of the heart. Who has not been conscious of the delightful, the hallowing effect, of the beautiful language of the Psalmist? "Oh come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." Yes, the God I am about to worship created me. He "covered me in my mother's womb." His "eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect." He planted this ear; he formed this eye; he breathed into these nostrils the breath of life, so that I became a living soul; and it was he that made me capable of knowing, of loving, and

of enjoying him for ever. "I will praise thee, O Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

And will not additional interest be given to the hour of worship, by a recognition of God as our continued Protector and Preserver? "The Lord is my SHEPHERD." How rich, how comprehensive, how affecting, the thought! The Lord is my Shepherd. Reader, do you endeavour habitually to enter into it, at the hour of devotion? Is it ever before you, in all the fulness of its meaning? However devoutly you may acknowledge the general superintendence of the Great Supreme, yet if, like the sceptic, you refuse to admit his special providence and care; if you expel him from the sanctuary, and thrust him away from the domestic circle; if you deny him admittance to your closet, or access to your bed; if, like the hapless idolater, you entertain the thought, that now he may be talking and then pursuing—now on a journey and then asleep; you take a limited and chilling view of his character, which cannot but unfit you for the sacred exercise. True, the affairs of his empire are conducted according to fixed laws, and the various departments of his government filled up by created agency; true, the shining of the sun and the falling of the rain are concerned in maturing the fruits of the earth; and the care of the parent in providing for the wants of the family: but it is equally true, that every true and every perfect gift comes to every creature, directly from the hand of the Father of lights.

And is the Lord our SHEPHERD? Then he knows his sheep. Daily he counts their numbers and marks their state. He goes before them, selects their pasture, and leads them to it. If one is attacked, he defends it; if one is sick, he heals it; if one goes astray, he follows it; if one is young and feeble, on that he lavishes his care, takes it up in his arms, and carries it in his bosom. And the Lord is my Shepherd! I shall not want; he maketh *me* to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth *me* beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul. Do I believe it; do I feel it to be true? then I can pray. My spirit is soothed; my heart refreshed; I am inspired with freedom, and confidence, and joy, in communion with God.

Yet these are not the only relations in which the object of our worship must be viewed. For the Lord is also our King, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our Judge. He is righteous, we are sinful; he is holy, we are unclean. "I saw also the Lord sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up . . . above it stood the seraphim . . . and one cried to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of hosts. The posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke;" and the favoured prophet himself said—"Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." And how, reader, shall *you* and *I* stand before this holy Lord God? For a small moment, we are cast down by a representation so fearfully sublime; we

are verily guilty ; conscience tells us we have no claim on the protection of this Creator, or the care of this Shepherd ;—nor are any considerations of mere mercy sufficient to allay our fears. Men may affect to be at peace, and to see in the paternal character of God alone, sufficient ground for hope ; but it is perilous to forget that “ the righteous Lord loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity ;” and whenever the question occurs to the serious mind, “ How shall man—how shall I—be just with God ?” there must, I apprehend, be misgivings and fears. For “ our God is a consuming fire.”

Yet there is hope : these apprehensions are allayed. The Holy One of Israel is also the Saviour thereof. “ God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself ; not imputing their trespasses unto them.” “ When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” We no longer *want* to conceive of God as a Father *only* ; in this view of him we rejoice with ineffable joy ; but we can admit, at the same time, the idea of his infinite rectitude and perfect purity, without distress or alarm. We have no need to resort to a defective conception to pacify our mind. We can behold him as *God*, we can think of him as *holy*, *just*, and *true*, and yet look up, and with the sweetest assurance and firmest trust can call him, in *Christ Jesus*, both our Father and our God.

Here, then, is another view of the Being we worship, which it is necessary for us to take when we bow at his footstool. He is our *Father in Christ Jesus*. And this, as it is the grandest, so is it the most interesting and important conception we can form. We are not warranted to rely on the power of the Creator, nor to expect the care of the Shepherd, but as we trust in the grace of the Redeemer. Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant ; the *only* Mediator between God and man ; and the promise is, that whatsoever we ask in *his* name, believing, we shall receive. But here a wide field opens to our view, which we cannot traverse. A few thoughts must suffice on the supreme importance of distinctly viewing *God in Christ*, at the hour of prayer.

We no longer need the presence of material symbols to direct our approach to God ; yet is the ancient Jewish service eminently adapted to throw light on the great facts of human redemption, and to give life and vigour to our apprehension of the nature and principles of evangelic worship. The Gospel scheme is peculiarly a *mediatorial scheme* ; and its worship is the communion of guilty and depraved creatures with the just and holy God, through the Mediator ; access to the Father of our spirits, through the Son of his love ; drawing near to the King eternal, in the name of the great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens ; pleading for pardon, for purity, for peace, for grace, for life, for heaven, for all things, by virtue of the sacrifice of the Son of God : it is *beholding*

*God in the face of Christ Jesus.* Of the Hebrew worship sacrifice and intercession were the distinguishing features ; nor were the Israelites permitted to approach the place of Jehovah's abode, without the offering of substitution and the officiating priest. But now, follow this mystic personage from the altar of sacrifice to the most holy place. After retiring with the blood of the victim, which had been slain for his own sins, he went a second time with the blood of the animal which the people had brought, and which he sprinkled with his finger on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat, seven times. Meanwhile, the scape-goat, on whose head the sins of the congregation were laid, was sent away into the wilderness. The high priest then took a censer of burning coals from the altar, and a handful of sweet incense, and burnt it within the veil ; as the smoke ascended and filled the house, the glory of the Lord appeared over the mercy-seat, broke through the cloud, and radiated the face of the representative of the people. God was well pleased, the sacrifice was accepted, and, with his countenance still shining, he came forth to the waiting assembly, saying to each, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

What was thus done in symbol in the tabernacle and the temple, was done in reality by Christ Jesus. In him we see united the true High Priest and the true sacrifice for sin. He offered himself for us upon the cross, and from the cross he passed into the heavens.

"The smoke of his atonement here,  
Darkened the sun and rent the veil,  
Made the new way to heaven appear,  
And showed the Great Invisible :  
Well pleased in Him our God looks down,  
And calls his rebels to a crown."

Thus he reconciled us to God. He became our Mediator. Through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Without him we can do nothing. All our highest conceptions of God must be formed by looking on the face of Christ. All our business with God must be transacted in the name of Christ. Because of our sinfulness, we can have no communion with God, but through the blood of Christ. Every offering we present, every hope we cherish on earth, must have respect to the death and intercession of Christ. In heaven we shall enjoy God in Christ for ever and ever. The mediation of Christ was necessary, not as some affirm that we say, to *dispose* God to show mercy ;—for he is the Author of the scheme ;—but to harmonize mercy with justice and grace with law ; to make the dignity and glory of the Monarch agree with the tenderness and compassion of the Parent ; and to exhibit that agreement and that harmony to the whole universe of being, that the moral government of God might be *seen* to be, in every respect, an

infinitely perfect government ; that God might be just while he justified the ungodly, and his name glorified in the salvation of sinners.

This must be understood, by those that would worship aright ; it must be believed, it must be felt. God must be conceived of, not according to our taste or fancy ; but as he is revealed to us in his word, as the *moral Governor of the universe* ; justly claiming a perfect worship and obedience from us his creatures, calling us to his bar, finding us guilty and polluted, pronouncing on us the sentence of condemnation, and saying, "Ye shall surely die."

But he must be conceived of as moved with compassion, meditating a plan for our recovery, of which substitution is the grand and powerful element ; and when he looked and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor,—as putting the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation, on his only-begotten Son, and sending him forth to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

The Son of God must be conceived of as promptly and cheerfully saying, "Lo I come ! in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O Lord." He is now the Angel of the covenant, the Messenger of the invisible Jehovah, the Kinsman of his rebellious creatures, Immanuel, God with us. In consequence of his undertaking, our world is preserved, guilty man is spared, a new order of things is introduced, and we may be saved from going down to the pit. All power and authority are given to him in heaven and on earth. His work, comprising his humiliation, his obedience to death in the form of a servant, and his intercession before the throne, forms a ground on which communication can be re-opened between heaven and earth ;—on which the sinner can be forgiven, the rebel justified, the heir of wrath made an adopted child, his prayers heard, his worship accepted, and himself admitted to the kingdom of heaven. It is also the ground of the donation of the Holy Spirit, who convinces him of sin, renews his heart, makes him willing to return to God, leads him to repentance and faith, sanctifies him, body, soul, and spirit ; and whose influences are as necessary to fit him for glory, as is the atoning work of Christ, to render him a subject of saving grace.

How complete is this scheme ! How glorious to God, how admirably adapted to the wants of man ! It has no defect ; no superfluity. If it has features, which, whilst in the flesh, my eye cannot clearly trace ; if it involves doctrines which transcend my present powers of apprehension ; yet do I see that those features are essential to its beauty, and that it is from those very truths it derives its invincible strength and its surpassing power. The moment I look at the person of Christ, and attempt to realize the thought that it is God manifest in the flesh, I am lost—whilst scarcely less mysterious is the doctrine of the cross—yet I am persuaded, that they are truths which the inspired writers have taught almost in every page. They are the warp of Divine



revelation, the staple of sacred truth ; I see them asserted often, and every where implied. There may be seasons in my mental history, when, if I could, I would explain them away, but the moment I begin to think of a Redeemer who is not Divine, and to divest his blood of its atoning virtue, I become conscious of violence done to the plainest declarations of the word of God ; I find my conceptions of Jehovah's character strangely lowered, and the God I have worshipped no longer infinitely perfect ; I feel the rock on which I stood giving way beneath my feet ; doubts and misgivings enter and harass my mind, and I tremble to stand at the bar of my judge, lest I should be found to have thrown away the only shield that can protect me from his wrath, and be disowned by the Father, for dishonouring his Son.

" But if Immanuel's face appear,  
My hope, my joy begins ;  
His name forbids my slavish fear,  
His grace removes my sins."

If he is a Divine Redeemer, his mediation *must* avail ; if his blood was shed to make atonement, it *must* cleanse from all sin ; so that were the balance of evidence even, were the matter left by the inspired writers doubtful to the impartial mind, it would be wisest and safest to incline to this view. But to me it is no matter of uncertainty, and when I thus look at God, and approach him in Christ Jesus, I am satisfied ; I want no more ; my conception of him is complete, for with the majesty of the Ruler, he blends the love of the Father ; the order of evangelic worship is perfect, for with Christ who died, for my advocate before him, no doubt enters my mind, no fear disturbs it, my soul has perfect peace ; and as I seek his face, and offer my praises, I enjoy the sweet and delightful persuasion that my worship is in harmony with that which the venerable disciple in Patmos heard, proceeding from every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth ; " Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Reader, do *you* worship God ? Are you conscious of making, every day, the attempt to render to him the adoration and thanksgiving which are evidently his due ? Let conscience speak.

But another inquiry is of still greater moment. Do you know God in Christ—and *worship* God in Christ ? " There is no other name given under heaven among men, by which you can be saved." How is it with you ? " How can you escape if you neglect so great salvation ?"

Once more. The blessedness which we are capable of attaining, from the worship of God in Christ, transcends all our conceptions. Are you satisfied with being merely *correct and safe* ; or, do you aim to get enlarged and vivid apprehensions of his surpassing glory, and to approach, in the nearness of your fellowship, to the saints in light ?

T. W.

REMARKS ON AN OBSERVATION OF DR. BENNETT RELATING  
TO THE FIRST EPISTLE OF CLEMENS ROMANUS.

THE Rev. Dr. Bennett, in his valuable and learned digest of the Theology of the early Christian church, has hazarded a remark upon Clemens Romanus against which I must be allowed to take exception. He says of the first epistle of that apostolic father, "that it was publicly read in the churches, though *after* the inspired Scriptures, was a disgrace to the early Christians, and leads us to regret that Clement ever wrote."—page 16. It is true the venerable divine does allow his epistle considerable value as a link between the inspired literature of the New Testament and the uninspired ecclesiastical writings of a later date, nevertheless we are bound to receive the censure above expressed as the deliberate opinion of Dr. Bennett, inasmuch as it is unaccompanied by any qualifying statement in the connexion where it occurs. I do not mean on the present occasion to appear as the formal advocate of the olden believers, nor of the Roman father, although I think their conduct susceptible of a valid defence, but to suggest an observation or two in connexion with Dr. Bennett's allegation, which may possibly abate the severity of his criticism. Should anything I may urge have so happy an effect, I shall rejoice in even partially redeeming the character of the early Christians from unmerited obloquy, and in winning respect to a document whose worth, I believe, is far from being appreciated as it ought.

The connexion in which the Congregational Lecturer has placed this sentence does not indicate very clearly the exact ground of the regret he expresses. It may be one of these three, or all together, and will be sufficiently met either in its individual or collective force by noticing them one by one.

The regret, then, will be grounded either, 1. Upon too great honour being shown to an uninspired writing by having it publicly read in the churches. I shall confine my remarks here to the epistle of Clement, as what applies to it will apply with nearly equal force to any uninspired production; or, 2. Upon the difficulty in the determination of the canon which such indiscriminate reading of the human and Divine Scripture in the churches might occasion; or, 3. Upon the too great loftiness of prerogative it claims for the clergy in certain parts—inducing in many persons the belief that these portions are the interpolations of a later age.

These may be called the popular objections against this epistle.

With regard to the *first* it may be urged, that the course the Corinthian and other churches pursued, in reading this epistle in their public assemblies, was perfectly natural, and we have yet to be convinced of its impropriety.

The letter was written, it will be remembered, in the name of the church at Rome to that at Corinth, on occasion of some disputes that prevailed in the latter community, which led to unkind and disrespectful treatment of their pastors. It breathes throughout the spirit of faithful remonstrance and Christian affection, and is overlaid with exhortations to brotherly love and peace. As it was a public document, it would of course be read *publicly*; and as it was one full of Scripture allusions, quotations, and practical teaching, it would have a permanent value, and thus be *often* read. But, unfortunately, the disputatious character of the Corinthian church was too much the character of other churches of that day; (alas, that poor converted human nature should make the confession necessary!) and this, as well as the real merits of the document, and the reputation of the author as a contemporary of the apostles, would cause it to be transcribed and read elsewhere.

Another circumstance that doubtless gave it early circulation, and raised it to the honour of public recitation in the churches, was, that the early Christian literature was excessively scanty. It was not until a century afterwards that the philosophers began in any numbers to join the Christian church, an accession which if it brought its advantages, brought its disadvantages too. I scarcely know any reading so pregnant with disappointment to the searcher after evangelical truth as the works of some of the philosophizing fathers. Many of their compositions are little better than those of the heathen; and after turning over half a folio at times to find something peculiar to Christianity, one is almost forced to exclaim, in the utter destitution of anything of the kind, "It is all barren!" By consequence, then, of having few books written about and shortly after Clement's time, and of not having many persons among the churches scattered far and wide, competent to instruct them *visâ voce*, (too often the churches were as sheep having no shepherd,) they were almost constrained to adopt the course the Reverend Lecturer condemns, viz., to make the epistle, multiplied by transcription, do the work of the living teacher, and serve instead of the oral homily. I look, then, upon the reading of such works as Clement's epistle, in the same light as the reading of the printed sermon or tract in our village or cottage station deprived of the services of one competent to preach. It would be very hard indeed to charge the good men who on such occasions use Burder's Village Sermons *with as undeviating a regularity as they read the Scriptures*, with disgraceful conduct for doing so, and it would be underrating the real worth of those compositions, to regret that they were written. But here I shall doubtless be met with the assertion that the people will never come to confound Burder's Sermons with Scripture, as some of the early Christians appear to have done by Clement's epistle and other writings of the same class. This naturally conducts me to a consideration of the objection we have numbered

2. Namely, That there might be a difficulty in the determination

of the canon, arising from this indiscriminate reading of human and Divine compositions in the public assemblies of the Christians.

I deny the correctness of the conclusion altogether, while I allow the very strong, and, in some instances, strange terms of commendation applied to merely human productions by some of the early ecclesiastical writers. I am not aware, as I have written upon the impulse of the moment, that Clement's epistle is any where called "Divine," "inspired," or "Scripture," (I make no account of what is said of it in the Apostolical Canons, as they are evidently spurious,)—but I know that Origen has said of the Shepherd of Hermas, "*Quæ scriptura valdè mihi utilis videtur, et, ut puto, divinitus inspirata.*" Yet that these, and a very few expressions of the same kind, occurring in the fathers, are not to be taken in an extreme sense, is obvious, from the conduct of those very fathers themselves, who into their lists of canonical books never ventured to insert these productions, which they have honoured with such extravagant encomiums. Origen calls the books of Maccabees, and Tobit, and Enoch, "Scripture," yet in his catalogue of inspired writings they have no place. The more I reflect upon the subject, the more I am convinced that the difficulty is rather ours in these later days, than was theirs, who lived in the midst of the circumstances we find so hard to understand. I am persuaded, too, that a wrong interpretation of the original terms of the fathers on particular occasions has helped to mislead us, as in the memorable instance in Origen contra Celsum, in which Spencer and the Benedictine editor have given such a different turn to the same important passage. I shall quote the two versions for the satisfaction of the reader, who may not be able to lay his hand conveniently upon them. Spencer says, "*Ne hic quidem videns, quòd mox ab initio non conveniebat inter credentes de delectâ divinorum sacræ scripturæ voluminum.*"

The Benedictine editor widely otherwise says, "*Neque hic novit jam tum ab initio fuisse de sensû librorum, qui divini esse credebantur, inter fideles dissidia.*"

It is further known, too, that the Greek term, by which the Scriptures are designated, *γραφη*, whether with or without the article, whether in the singular or plural number, is marked by all the ambiguity of our English word *writing*. It has a technical or conventional sense, as well as an ordinary one. I cannot but attribute to this circumstance some of the misrepresentations of the views of the fathers, which are current in controversy. Nothing would be so easy or natural, as to wrest their commendation of "a very powerful *writing*," in the ordinary sense, into a "very powerful *scripture*," in the technical.

But, as a question of fact, we are now prepared to ask, did the recital of uninspired works, in the early churches, ever disturb the claim of the canonical Scriptures to their unquestioned supremacy? and the answer is prompt as we can enunciate its syllables—never. We do not

believe that ever, in vulgar apprehension, or in the judgments of the learned, among the Christians of the three first centuries, there was the slightest encroachment upon the sublime solitude of the sacred Scriptures, by any uninspired writing whatsoever laying claim to equality of regard. We must judge of the olden believers by their actions, and not by the unguarded or enthusiastic expressions of two or three doctors of the church scattered over two or three centuries. Origen, Eusebius, and Epiphanius testify that the canon of their days was the same as ours, in the exclusion of all we deem apocryphal, and that so far from being possessed by the credulous spirit that would enlarge the canon upon doubtful evidence, the Christians of their time regarded with suspicion some writings which we, without hesitation, admit. Their tendencies were always toward compression, excision, rather than towards expansion and interpolation. Whatever, then, may be our impression now, of the propriety or desirableness of their admitting uninspired religious works so freely into their public services, we must own, on the evidence of facts, that this never disturbed the exclusive homage they paid to the New Testament as the word of God. The last canon of the council of Laodicea proves the same thing, if it be allowed to be genuine. That council cannot, with any show of reason, be alleged to have *fixed, defined*, the canon of Scripture as a thing undefined before. None but the infidel could represent, and none but an unreasonable being suppose, that that council, out of a number of documents claiming to be Scripture, made an arbitrary selection of those which were thenceforward to be considered as exclusively Divine. Whatever credit may attach to the conflicting and very uncertain accounts of that assembly, one thing is certain, that any enactment of theirs upon the subject is to be considered as the voice of public opinion in their day, and not as the decision of the divines in that obscure and scanty conclave. There was nothing in their religious opinions, or ecclesiastical position, to make them set themselves against the common voice, had it been in favour of the inspiration of the various apocryphal books, then in occasional use in the churches; and nothing in their numbers or influence to secure the adoption of their canon throughout the Catholic Church, as we find it to have prevailed. So many reasons present themselves now to my mind, demonstrative of the absurdity of such a belief, that my paper would be too short to hold them, and I must leave the reader to enlarge in thought upon the few hints just given him. The whole strain of my remarks, however, and, I believe, all the facts of the case, go to show that the regret expressed by Dr. Bennett, that ever Clement's first epistle was written, is unfounded, if it originated in the fear of the exclusive authority of inspiration being shared with uninspired works. It can never be too strongly insisted upon by the friends of revelation, that let the terms in which apocryphal writers have been commended by the early

Christians be what they may, never did believers confound in their thoughts for an instant the authoritative dogmata of the Holy Ghost with the fraternal epistles, edifying expositions, learned apologies, or prudent advisements, of the human counsellor.

This to my own mind carries the most satisfying conviction that the *canonicity* of the canon ultimately rests upon grounds far more stable than the decisions of councils, or the general consent of the Christian church. It is quite certain, that from the earliest age certain works had vogue among the Christian assemblies which were not inspired. It is quite certain that the very strongest language has been employed to express the veneration of Christians for these documents. And it is equally certain, that between these, and the books that now form our canon, there has always been "a great gulf fixed" in general estimation. To what shall we attribute this distinction? I believe to a self-evident divineness marking the word of God, and to as evident a want of that divineness characteristic of the most elaborate and excellent productions of man. The latter may be loved, prized, lauded, (we are ready to confess they were by some of the early Christians almost beyond due measure,) but they never sought to bring the former down from its elevation, nor robbed it of its distinctiveness, nor claimed to be the companions of its march when it went forth "dread, fathomless, alone."

In writing upon the canon, then, the proper course and true policy to our apprehension is, not to show that the works of Clement or others, honoured with recitation in early places of Christian worship, are, in themselves, trivial and absurd, "a disgrace" to the authors or admirers; but to show that, however valuable or valued, they were never ranked in the same class with the *ὁμολογούμενα* of Scripture, but were penned up, in the secret heart and in the open confession of Christians, within the pale of a most palpable and emphatic distinction. Now, this is a view which I conceive has never been brought as prominently out in discussion upon the canon as it deserves, and I would humbly suggest it to the consideration of any future writer upon the subject. I may take the liberty of naming, by the way, that a new work on the canon *ought to be* acceptable to the Christian church in its present position, inasmuch as Jones is not only old, but disfigured by many incorrect statements in his text; as on no subject so vital to Christianity does ignorance so largely prevail; and as on no other do the half-informed think Christianity so vulnerable. On this subject little that is really new could be advanced, but blemishes might be removed and defects supplied, and the arguments as they took the mould of a fresh mind might present themselves in shapes better adapted to the inquiring spirit of the age. Were there anything in the present condition of general literature like the prospect (not of renumeration, but) of being borne free of expense in a publication of the kind, I know of none nobler to



stimulate the holy ambition of the student to encounter the days of toil and nights of waking which such an enterprise would involve. The Congregational Lecture might commit it with advantage to one of the masters of their Israel; otherwise we may perhaps have to add this to the long list of the things that *should* rather than *will* be.

3. The third reason for slighting the epistle of Clement is, That its claims for deference to the ministry are inordinate—so that many have been led to question the genuineness of those portions of the work where they are put forth. I see no reason whatever myself, to question the genuineness of this epistle on account of anything that it contains. It is true the author has gravely availed himself of a mythological incident or two, as if they were undoubted fact, to illustrate the truth; and it is true that he has claimed much deference for the clergy as rulers of the church of God. But although I may lament the former, it is no proof of the spuriousness of the work, because it is just of a piece with much that is in the later Clement and other ecclesiastical writers of the next century; and the latter I think quite justified by the facts of the case. I am very far from supposing what he has urged in behalf of the ἡγούμενοι and the ἐλῆροι the interpolation of a later age, and my reasons I will give, without entering at all into the scholastic matter which the successive editors have put out on the subject of the genuineness of the epistle.

1. I think Clement has said no more on this head than he ought. I will not pledge myself to every expression of the venerable father; for it is some time since I read him through, and although I have him now before my eye, I cannot find time to run over him again before I finish this paper; but I cannot hesitate to give him my general concurrence in what he has demanded of respect and observance for the ministers of the church. I am not aware that he has said a word upon the subject that Paul might not have written to a self-sufficient and unruly people, nor for which Paul has not given more than sanction in his "Ye have reigned as kings without us."

2. I think it quite natural that, in the early churches, a frequent assertion of ministerial authority should have been rendered necessary by the almost democratic character of their institution. Most of the converts were won from Judaism, where they had been accustomed to the control of a hierarchy that extended its organization over the land, and made itself felt in all the economy of social life; while those who came over from paganism, came from a similar order of things, although in a less stringent degree. Both classes were introduced to a system in which a distinct order of priesthood had no place, and where the only honour conferred upon the officiating brethren, was that they were least of all—servants unto all. Emancipated from the chains of sacerdotal dominion, the newly obtained liberty was likely to be abused, and they who had no human head would soon, except

where grace restrained them, throw off subjection to human guidance, and the observance of necessary order. Shaping their conduct, then, upon the model of the Pauline epistles, and setting themselves in array against an insubordination more likely to grow and be felt under uninspired men than under the apostles, the most natural and proper course for these apostolic fathers was, to urge respect for ministerial authority. That they should thus and often express themselves, is in perfect harmony with my view of the situation of the churches in those days; nor do I think that Clement claimed more for the pastors of the flock than the New Testament concedes.

I regret to learn from a painful communication to the Rev. Dr. J. Pye Smith, which has been published, that the same democratic views are beginning to prevail among the churches of our order in the manufacturing districts, and that some of our ministers are feeling painfully the inconvenience of them. I trust it will operate as a warning to those dear brethren who are indiscreet enough to join the Chartists in their political movements; for while I lean to the persuasion, that it is inexpedient for ministers of religion to take a *very* prominent part in public affairs, I am *quite sure* that coincidence with *Chartism* is suicidal to character, comfort, and usefulness. We speak from observation when we say, that just in proportion as the principles of that system gain footing in a neighbourhood, so does disorganization make way in the Christian churches there. Self-interest, if no higher motive, should make the minister of religion the strenuous inculcator of the maxim that government, ecclesiastical and political, is from God. No society can get on without it, and religious societies are not exempted from the action of the general law. To those who think rightly on the subject, government is not so much a yoke and bondage as a benevolent provision of Him who "knoweth our frame."

3. The utter neglect of this epistle by the Church of Rome at once commends it to my approval, and stamps it with genuineness. The anti-hierarchical Protestant considers it spurious in those parts which contain emphatic assertions of the rights of the clergy, but because it does *not do so with sufficient emphasis*, it would appear to be slighted by that haughty communion, which has always stayed its pretensions upon ecclesiastical antiquity, whenever support was to be found in that quarter. If ever there was a fit subject for dishonest interpolation, in maintenance of her usurpations, it was here, in this second oldest, and, if the epistle of Barnabas be rejected, this oldest remain of uninspired Christian composition. Had it been that that church had either found in Clement's epistle, or put into it, anything that would have borne out the lordship over God's heritage which it has established, copies would have been dispersed over the world, it would have been constantly quoted and appealed to, and we should not have been reduced to the pitiable condition of having only one manuscript from

which to form our text. But, after having slumbered in a monastery for centuries, as a thing of no value to the hierarchies of Rome or Constantinople, a single codex providentially preserves to us the precious relic, and enables us to judge for ourselves how this early father wrote. When we come, however, to the perusal of these miserably mutilated and time-worn pages, we see tenfold more force than ever in Bentley's reasonings against Collins on the value of many copies to the ascertainment of a correct text. That this Clementine epistle, then, should advocate the cause of ill-used presbyters in the Corinthian church, seems no more than the occasion would justify, while, that it should urge their claims so modestly as to afford no countenance to Romish assumption, is to us all-convincing evidence of its genuineness. On either consideration we cannot acquiesce in the expression of regret that it has been written.

In what Dr. Bennett has said of Clement, that he is a preacher rather than an epistolator, I quite concur. But his simplicity, and earnestness, and occasional eloquence, are quite charming. Indeed, I know few short courses of reading more profitable and delightful than the *genuine* remains of the apostolical fathers. Amid convincing evidence of the weakness of the good men, there is yet so much of pious feeling spread over their writings, as to make them at once edifying and refreshing. I will justify what I say about the occasional eloquence of the fathers by a paragraph from Clement's first epistle. It is where the Roman bishop is urging peace and love upon the Corinthians, by arguments drawn from the observable harmonies of nature, and begins thus : οὐρανοὶ τῇ διοικήσει αὐτοῦ σαλευόμενοι ἐν εἰρηνῇ ὑποτάσσονται αὐτῷ, κ. τ. λ.

The pensile heavens His stewardship obey,  
 Harmonious moving : rapid day and night  
 Run their alternate round, nor meet nor clash  
 In mid career. The sun, and moon, and stars  
 Weave their dance implicate, yet ne'er transgress  
 The choral law of peace. The pregnant earth  
 At times ordained, and by His high behest,  
 Food for all living yields, *His* willing slave  
 And friend to *them*. Abyssy depths untracked  
 By foot of man, and depths profounder still  
 Of Tartarus, his ordinance own. The flux  
 Of mightiest tides sinks, swells beneath his eye ;  
 The drop and billow hear His voice alike,  
 And do His will. The sandy rampire they  
 Nor dare nor seek to pass ; " Thus far," so runs  
 The record, " may the ocean come in strength,  
 Here must it stay its pride ! " The boundless sea  
 Expansive, and worlds unexplored beyond,  
 Are His to rule, Autocrator of all.  
 Spring, summer, golden autumn, and the chill  
 Of winter interchange, and live in peace.

The mutable winds are servants of a home  
 Where He is Lord, and to Him minister.  
 His are the springs beneficent to man,  
 For health and pleasure, use and beauty made,  
 Whose gushing paps he hath in bounty formed  
 To shed their milk on earth. In meanest things  
 His hand is seen, his ordinance is peace.  
 Thus the wide world is His, its Fashioner  
 And Lord. His power creates, his law controls.  
 That law is love, himself is only love.  
 A God of peace, he loveth peace in all,  
 Seeks it in all, but seeks it most in those  
 Who taste his love, nor condemnation fear.  
 Have ye received mercy? refuged in  
 The breast of infinite compassions? Go,  
 Strong in the grace of Christ, and mercy show.  
 Be copyists of His love, who seek to bless  
 Their brother man, forgiving as forgiven,  
 Forbearing wrong, and ready to do good.  
 The law of peace, which meaner things obey,  
 Observe; let life with you be HARMONY,  
 And holy LOVE.

I copy this from the margin where I pencilled it on my last perusal. I am fully prepared to hear that this passage gains nothing by its rhythmical dress over the musical periods of the original, to which my reply will be that I did not seek the numbers, "the numbers came." I will readily own too, that the sonorous old Greek loses much of its grace by transfusion into another tongue. Enough, however, has surely been done to prove that the elements of poetry and eloquence are here. I cannot conclude this paper more happily than by the elegant encomium of Wotton, which will show that I am not alone in a high appreciation of the Roman father, nor, but for one qualifying word, Origen quite alone in his indiscreet use of the word *inspiration*: "Illa vis et *εμπνευα* divina ubique in eo (sc. Clemente) refulget, quæ suo fulgore percellit animum legentis; adeo ut, pene dicam, Spiritum Dei, non hominem in eo loquentem sentias."

D.

## REVIEWS.

*Three Sermons on the Church, Preached in the Parish Church of St. James, Westminster, during Lent, 1842. By Charles James, Lord Bishop of London.* Second Edition. Fellowes.

THESE discourses have evidently been drawn up with no ordinary care; and we can easily conceive that the fashionable audience which listened to them at St. James's church, might feel astonished at the perverseness and ignorance, if not presumption, which could induce any person to deny or question the truth of doctrines so cautiously, and often with so much apparent candour, laid down by their learned diocesan. In fact, the Bishop of London is no ordinary man. He is a man of great industry, great judgment, great activity; he perfectly understands the position in which he stands as to power and influence: he is as bold as well as a cautious man, and will not flinch at difficulties if he thinks it practicable to overcome them. He is one who dares to look his opponents in the face, to read what they have written, and even to quote them; thus showing the confidence which he has in his own views.

If, however, we could reach the ear, or the minds, of those who heard these discourses, we would earnestly entreat them to withhold their assent to many of the statements therein contained, till they had, deliberately, and with prayer for Divine guidance, compared them with the testimony of Scripture. We cannot but think that as a whole they would have been regarded by the apostle Paul, or any of the first Christian preachers and missionaries, as exhibiting a Gospel which, if not indeed absolutely "another," at least substituted other doctrines, other discipline, and another spirit, in most important respects, in place of some of those which are to be found in the New Testament.

The first sermon of the three is on Acts ii. 47, *The Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved*. The following is the author's summary of this discourse:—"I endeavoured to show, that in order to salvation, it was necessary, generally speaking, to be added to the church by incorporation, or engrafting, through baptism: that the church itself is a spiritual society, founded by Jesus Christ, its Divine and perpetual Head, its frame and constitution being afterwards constructed and settled by his apostles, acting with his authority, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost; secondly, that its office is, to bring sin-

ners to Christ, by furnishing to those who are incorporated into it, the means of knowledge and holiness; and that it is not merely *instrumental* as a teacher, but *sacramental*, as conveying and dispensing grace; thirdly, that it consists of all those, who, having been admitted into it by baptism, hold the faith as it is in Jesus, and who use, or do not obstinately refuse and reject, their spiritual privileges; and that all local churches, which can trace their apostolical descent, and teach the pure word of God, and duly administer the ordinances of Christ, are branches, more or less flourishing and faithful, of the one holy universal church. It was further observed, that the definition of the church given in our own articles, makes the essentials of a church to be purity of Scripture doctrine, and sacramental completeness, leaving it still open to inquiry, what the different features of that completeness are; but still it cannot be denied, that all things of necessity requisite to the due administration of the sacraments must be found in a church which justly claims to be a branch of the holy catholic church. The inquiry, what those things are, is intimately connected with the questions which I purpose to make the subject of this and the following discourse."

The Bishop denies the right of those who dissent from episcopacy, wherever episcopacy is established, to all claim to be regarded as forming a part of the holy catholic church of Christ. But we must first state that we have carefully endeavoured to ascertain the sentiments of the Bishop of London on the momentous subject of regeneration, so far as they can be gathered from these discourses. He admits that it is not a certain consequence that all who are added to the "visible body of Christ by baptism are finally saved;" but he says, that by this incorporation they are "enabled to do that which, without such incorporation, would have been impracticable, to work out their own salvation." If the Bishop means that, now that the Christian dispensation has been revealed to men, there is no salvation without baptism, what would he say of the case of Cornelius? what must he say of many in our day who exemplify the Christian character in an eminent degree, in its most illustrious features,—we allude to many who belong to the society of Friends? No doubt, however, the Bishop would deny the latter a place in the church of God on the ground of their rejection of episcopacy. In answering the question "What is the church?" we are properly told that "it denotes a company of persons believing in Jesus Christ," though in the text the word denotes "the general assembly of the faithful." "To this mystical body," the author proceeds to say, "those who are added are united by baptism; *which*, says St. Peter, *doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*. A new principle of life is infused into him; he is regenerate, born anew of water and of the Spirit, and placed in a new relation to God, as one of his own peculiar family and household," &c.—p. 8.



If this is not baptismal regeneration, with a pretty strong tincture of Puseyism, or in other words, Romanism, we know not what is. Nor can we justify the Bishop's quotation from Peter, garbled as it is by the omission of the exegetical clause, which must have effectually prevented the first Christians from understanding the passage almost, if not quite, literally. When a text of Scripture is quoted to support a theological opinion, it ought, in fairness, to be cited in such a way as that mistake as to its bearing should as much as possible be avoided, and *that* part of the verse ought to have been given to the audience at St. James's, in which the apostle expressly says, that salvation is connected not with mere baptism, *not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.*

Agreeably to this view of baptism, Dr. Blomfield proceeds to affirm, that "the church is the appointed medium, or instrumental means, in and through which individual sinners must appropriate to themselves the pardon which Christ has purchased for all." And here the preacher means something more, it will be seen, than that the Gospel of Christ is intrusted into the hands of the church, in order that the church may diffuse it abroad over the world. The church is, it would seem, a *sacramental institution*; for we are told, that sinners appropriate to themselves pardon, "first being admitted by baptism into the church, and so acquiring a title to its privileges, and *grace to use them.*" The italics are our own; but this is coming to the point. We have said that these sermons are drawn up with evident caution; considerable pains, we think, appear to have been taken to avoid such statements as may render themselves liable to the charge of being extreme in their own way. Sometimes the Bishop's language is such as to be capable of being understood either in an evangelical, or an orthodox, (high-church,) or Puseyite sense. But there can be no mistake when we are plainly told, that by baptism into the church, both a title is acquired to its privileges, and *grace to use them.* Let us see, then, what inference the Bishop draws from the doctrine, that grace to use church-privileges is acquired by baptism, by which he must mean a pious, holy disposition to employ them aright; at least, if this be not meant by "grace to use them," we are absolutely at a loss what signification to attach to the words. The inference is, that "it is of very great importance to every one of us, to ascertain whether he be really 'a member of the church.'" But then follows, as a necessary preliminary, the question, "what that church is of which our Lord himself declared that he would found it upon a rock, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; and since those who are to be saved must be added thereto, there cannot surely be wanting some distinguishing marks, wherein those who seek for refuge in that ark of safety may recognize the impress of its Divine origin and authority." The upshot of the affair is, that the episcopal church alone is *the* church—that church of

Christ which thus by her ministers dispenses grace in baptism! that in the British isles the only church of Christ is what is called the "church of England," (the church of Rome, as being episcopal, of course excepted;) the only institution which bears "the impress of its Divine origin and authority," is the church of England—that church, (O ye ever-venerated shades of our Puritan and Nonconformist forefathers!) which, for conscience towards God, put your sensitive bodies to the torture, and the dungeon, and the pains of a martyr's death!—that church whose time-serving and double-dealing prelates, in hearty league with the treacherous and abandoned libertine who *made them*, and whom, by a most solemn mockery and prostitution of sacred words, they had the meanness and the impiety to pronounce in their public prayers, in the face of heaven and the nation, a "*most religious king*," condemned you to silence, O ye confessors! Howe, Baxter, Flavel, Owen, Bates, and two thousand more like-minded, and for no other crime than that of being peaceably faithful to your conscientious religious convictions, and nobly daring to disavow the corrupt practices which remained in the Protestant church! The Bishop of London is an intelligent man; but it is quite possible that he may never have read the history of his own church but through the medium of the writings of the high-churchmen on whose authority he so often leans for support in these sermons. We have not much hope of his ever being a church reformer, (for, unhappily, there are counteracting influences preventing a second reformation, which are far more potent than all argument, however convincing in itself,) but we would strongly recommend his lordship to read the short account of the reasons why the Nonconformists were ejected, as given by the learned, candid, and moderate Dr. Calamy, in the introduction to Palmer's Memorial of the Nonconformists. We shall have more to say in the sequel on the claims of the episcopal church of England; we must now content ourselves with respectfully requesting the Bishop of London to point out the method in which the blood-stained tithe-campaigns in Ireland, and the church-rate incarcerations and seizures of property in England, the whole system of ecclesiastical-law rapacity, and the almost entire absence of real Christian discipline which the church of England exhibits, present "the impress of its Divine origin and authority," as distinguished from all other forms and professions of Christianity in this country?

On proceeding with the perusal of the first discourse, we meet with further marks of essential Puseyism, or in fact, Romanism. What else but Puseyite or Romish views of the church are inculcated, when the Bishop says that "the church is not merely *instrumental*, as a teacher, but *sacramental*, as a medium of the believer's personal union with his Saviour, conveying and dispensing grace?" We can perceive a sense quite consistent with the analogy of faith, in which the church of Christ

or any particular company of believers united together in fellowship, may be said to convey and dispense grace, *instrumentally*; but the use of the term *sacramentally* evidently points to a mystic sense, which it may not be easy to define, (and the Bishop has not condescended to distinguish and explain the two terms as was required,) but which at least savours very much of the *opus operatum*.

Bishop Blomfield says, that the church consists of "all who, having been admitted into it by baptism, hold the faith as it is in Jesus, and who use, or do not obstinately refuse, their spiritual privileges." The italics are not the author's; but we have marked this latter clause of the sentence, as somewhat unintelligible. The language would seem to mean, that a man may be a Christian without being very careful to avail himself of the various means of grace, provided he does not absolutely and perseveringly reject them when they are pressed on his attention by another; a somewhat negative way, it strikes us, of defining the Christian character, and which would seem to open a very wide door to a mere nominal Christianity. For, provided a man holds strongly by all and every thing in the prayer-book, having been baptized in his infancy, and now and then goes to church, when told perhaps by the rector on his estate in the country that he ought to go at least when the eyes of his peasantry are upon him, "*not obstinately refusing* this spiritual privilege," it would seem that it will be taken for granted that he is a good Christian.

How many such are there among the most staunch supporters of "the church!" Indeed the diocesan of this vast metropolis, who no doubt considers himself entitled, more than any other man, to give ghostly advice to two millions of people, and many more, seems very tender of pressing matters too far as to the requirements of the Christian character; and we have no doubt that, with a few local exceptions, the discipline which is kept up in the dissenting churches would not be tolerated in the church of England. According to the Bishop, the church of Christ, (and such, on the authority of the "right reverend father in God," is *his* church alone in this country,) and the world seem to be pretty much the same thing.

Having quoted the 26th article, as follows:

"In the visible church, the evil be ever mingled with the good. The effect of Christ's ordinance is not taken away by the wickedness of those who may minister the word and sacraments, nor the grace of God diminished from such as by faith rightly receive the sacraments," the Bishop adds: "and how merciful is this provision with respect to the evil, while it is not injurious to the good! for as long as wicked men are externally in the church, they are within hearing of the church's warnings and invitations, within reach of the Spirit's teaching and influences: the means of conversion are accessible to them; and though they have departed from grace and fallen into sin, yet by grace they may arise again and amend their lives; and, therefore, it is only the obstinately wicked, and contumaciously impenitent, who are to be shut out from the visible church upon earth."

We do not wish to misunderstand, much less to misrepresent his lordship, but even on the most candid interpretation, we must say, that the whole effect of this passage is to convey to the reader's mind precisely that lax and accommodating idea of church discipline which has characterized all established churches, and eminently so the church of England. Does the Bishop of London mean to plead for the propriety of allowing wicked ministers, and wicked men, to remain recognized members of the Christian church; and are they only to be rejected when they go beyond some uncertain and ill-defined limit, pronounced to be obstinacy in wickedness, and contumacy in impenitence; that is, we suppose, the sin which, of all others, seems to be regarded as the greatest by high-churchmen, disrespect to ecclesiastical authority? And does the preacher mean to say, that such a system "is not injurious to the good?" Let us hear St. Paul, whose successor the Bishop claims to be, and with whose spiritual authority he assumes to be invested: "Evil communications corrupt good manners."—1 Cor. xv. 33. "Now I have written unto you not keep to company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them that are without? do ye not judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."—1 Cor. v. 11—13. We repeat that we should be sorry to misrepresent his lordship, but we ask any candid person to allow his mind to feel the just impression of the difference produced by the *spirit* of St. Paul's injunctions respecting church discipline, and the Bishop of London's, notwithstanding the qualifying clause respecting obstinacy in wickedness, and contumacy in impenitence. Do not the spirit and tendency of the Bishop's sentiments on discipline, which is the grand safeguard and palladium of the church's purity, does not the doctrine thus authoritatively inculcated for the guidance of the multitude of clergy who are under his sway, perfectly harmonize, we ask, with the *omnium gatherum* complexion which the church of England has always presented as regards those whom she has acknowledged as her true sons, and as the worthy members of Christ's body, from Henry the wife-slayer, and that most "*religious*" king, Charles the Second, down to the country squires, the protestant ascendancy gentry, and the political supporters of "church and state," of all sorts, and of all characters, in modern times? So far as consistency is concerned, the Bishop is undoubtedly right: the actual administration, of the church of England, the almost entire absence which, as a whole, it presents, of anything which can truly be called apostolic discipline as seen in the first churches, required such a theoretical statement, as should not exhibit a contrast with the reality. No doubt, the church of England is admirably adapted for all such persons as are willing to

have the credit of being genuine members of the church of Christ, and to enjoy all the privileges which in this country are secured to many classes by their being Episcopalians, while at the same time they have a great and very appropriate horror of every thing bordering on *Puritanism*, or, in other words, that separation from the world, in conduct and spirit, which was so unequivocally laid down by the apostles as essential to a genuine church of Christ.

We do not think that the lax way in which Dr. Blomfield speaks of the qualifications for church membership, and the tendency of what he has said to induce the supposition that "wicked men," unless under peculiar circumstances, ought to remain acknowledged members of Christ, are atoned for by what follows :

"But let us not forget the dangerous state in which those persons must necessarily be, who, having been added to the church as sinners to be saved, live as though nothing further were to be done to secure salvation. They are not members of Christ's mystical body for nothing. Their spiritual state, if it be not *better*, in consequence of their baptism, must be *worse* : all the privileges and immunities of church membership are to those who diligently use them, a *savour of life unto life* ; but to the profane and careless, a *savour of death unto death* ; for those, says St. Paul, who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away—crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

The Bishop evidently understands this passage simply to refer to baptized persons falling into sin : but he has not given the whole passage. The apostle Paul says of the persons described, that "*it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance* : " yet the Bishop pleads for wicked men remaining in the church of Christ, as "a means of their conversion." Such is the theology of the diocesan of London. We must leave his lordship to reconcile his statements with themselves, and with the New Testament. To us, we confess, his administration of the Gospel, as here exhibited, is very crude, presenting exceedingly ill-digested doctrine to the ungodly, and is, as a whole, very much like "untempered mortar."

## THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

1. *Truth for the Times. A Letter to the Dissenters. By W. H. Dorman.* London: Simpkin and Co., 12mo, pp. 32.
2. *A Letter to the Rev. W. H. Dorman, in Reply to his Tract called "Truth for the Times," by A Congregational Dissenter.* London: Houlston and Stoneman, 12mo, pp. 16.
3. *Reasons for not Uniting with a Class of Religionists, Known by the name of the Brethren, Deduced from their own Publications, by A Member of one of the Sects.* London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., 12mo, pp. 52.
4. *Nothing New; or, The Judgment of the Old Divines on Sentiments Agitated in their Day, and now Revived by the Brethren.* London: Simpkin and Marshall, 18mo, pp. 90.
5. *The Old Paths; A Few Brotherly Hints to the Brethren, by C. T. Rust, of Colchester.* London: Simpkin and Marshall, 12mo, pp. 32.
6. *The Christian Pastorate in Relation to the Times; A Discourse Delivered before the Associated Churches of East Devon, by Orlando T. Dobbin.* London: Dinnis, 8vo, pp. 48.

THE period has departed, and probably for ever, when the state of things can be met with, described by the men who, in the hearing of an ancient prophet, said, "We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest." Whatever be the tendency of the present times, they are, unquestionably, marked by stirring qualities, a love of novelty, a desire of change, and a disposition to push opinions and principles to their extreme points. This is the case in the world and in the church, and the fact may be read in political disquisitions, and in religious treatises; or be seen embodied in the practices of men of all parties, and in every department of public life. That all the excitement and contention of the times in which we live will be overruled for good, we cannot doubt; that the truth of heaven will ultimately triumph over all the forms of error with which it has to contend, we are assured; and that the divisions of the church will finally be healed, and her contentions subside, not into the stagnancy of moral death, but into the healthy onward movement of a gentle stream of life and love, we firmly believe; and these convictions are to us a source of exquisite consolation while girding on the harness, and endeavouring to be "valiant for the truth." We are tired of the warfare in which the church is painfully involved, and sigh for the repose awaiting her in the latter-day glory, and in heaven; and yet ever and anon we feel it to be our duty to come forth from our retreat, and oppose the aggressions of the Papacy, the intolerant assumptions of Puseyism, the destructive principles of an avowed or



semi-infidelity, and, as now, the conceits, dogmatism, and uncharitableness of Plymouth Brethrenism. Though years have rolled away since the question was asked and answered, in contemporary journals, Who are the Brethren? though the press has teemed with pamphlets and periodicals intended to illustrate and to commend their peculiarities; and though we have not been indifferent observers of the advancement of their opinions, or of the havoc they have made in some of our churches, yet we have hitherto forbore to bring the question prominently to view in the pages of the *Congregational Magazine*; but circumstances now convince us, that as there is a time to speak as well as to be silent, the time has arrived in which we owe it to our constant readers, as well as to the new sect, to put on record our deliberate opinion of its views, spirit, and practices.

We could wish to speak rather of Brethrenism than of the Brethren, so called, and if convenience dictates a departure from this, we shall avoid all personalities, and endeavour to discard all that is unchristian in temper, or irritating in language, attempting to speak the truth in love, so as not to sacrifice charity even on the altar of righteousness. That we are imperatively called upon to vindicate our views of ecclesiastical polity and Christian worship will not be doubted by any one who has read the first-named tractate at the head of this article. The author of "Truth for the Times," was a Dissenter, educated in one of our colleges, and the pastor of a Congregational church; but having gone out from us, and joined the Brethren, he has deemed it his duty to decry his former associates, and to speak in unmeasured terms of reprobation of that system, which, after mature deliberation, he adopted, and the scripturalness of which he avowed at his ordination. The following paragraphs are fair samples of his book.

"A dissenting church is not really a union of believers in Christ on the common ground of redemption by the blood of Christ; it is not a gathering together on that ground in which all true believers must be agreed, but upon those points on which they confessedly differ. Every system of Dissent is opposed to the blessed rule and freedom of the Spirit of God in the church. An Independent church is an organized body of professed Christians, claiming the right to choose their own pastor, to appoint their own officers, to vote in the reception or exclusion of their own members, and to exercise all the functions of a self-constituted body. To say nothing of the absence of all authority from the word of God for the exercise of particular acts, I see nothing throughout but the hopeless recognition of *man's will* and *man's right*, to the exclusion of the authority of the Holy Ghost, and subjection to the expressed will of Him 'who loved the church, and gave himself for it.'" pp. 13, 14.

We can but lament the dementing influence of prejudice on the mind of one, who ought to know and speak otherwise than he has here spoken, of communities who are professedly formed and act "in subjection to Christ in all things;" but we are compelled to recognize this element in Mr. Dorman's judgment, in order to shelter him from the graver charge of bearing false witness against his brethren. His pam-

phlet has received an able reply from the pen of "A Congregational Dissenter," who examines *seriatim* the charges brought against us; and while admitting our imperfections as men, contends for the scriptural nature of our principles, and the catholicity of our practice.

The "Reasons for not Uniting with the Brethren," arose out of an appeal placed before their author, to induce him to separate from the church with which he is connected, and to join himself to the new sect. He submitted to the drudgery of reading most of their tracts, and several papers in their understood accredited periodical, "The Inquirer," now extinct, and from these has drawn the most powerful reasons for not connecting himself with the Brethren. We know of no pamphlet on the whole controversy so well fitted to exhibit their real opinions and conduct as this; and would commend it most cordially to such persons as wish to know who and what the Brethren actually are.

The pamphlet entitled "Nothing New," is a judicious selection from the writings of the great theologians of former days, on questions which have been agitated by the Plymouth party, and set up by them as novelties, or as truths hid since apostolic times; and while it is not pretended that the judgment thus pronounced is infallible, it proves that all the peculiarities of Brethrenism have been held, by one party or another, at different periods since the Reformation, and have been objected to as unscriptural, by Calvin and Owen, Howe and Henry, Doddridge and Scott, and others like-minded with them. This book of extracts is truly valuable.

The fifth work in our list, while addressed to the Brethren at large, is particularly directed to Mr. Dorman, and examines rather closely several of his dogmatic assertions, and endeavours to justify the general construction and working of Congregational churches. It is a well written pamphlet, and would be of considerable service in moderating the feelings of the persons to whom it is addressed, if they could be induced to give it a candid perusal.

We have placed at the end of the catalogue of works on this controversy an able sermon by Mr. Dobbin, the esteemed and gifted classical tutor of the Western Academy, on the "Christian Pastorate," in which he states with much clearness, the nature of the office, proves its perpetuity, and vindicates, in an eloquent and pious strain, the validity of the Congregational pastorate, from the assaults of high churchmanship on the one hand, and of Brethrenism on the other. Apart from the bearing of this sermon on the times, it is much fitted to minister permanently to the edification of pastors and their flocks. It deserves to be rescued from the ephemeral place usually assigned to single sermons, and, in order to this, we should much like to see it, in a second edition, presented in the shape of a treatise, and printed on a smaller page, in which form it would be a volume entitled to find a place on the study-

table of every pastor throughout the land. We earnestly recommend our brethren in Suffolk and Devon to circulate widely this well-timed production, which is published at the request of the East Devon Association.

Having thus indicated our opinion of the works before us, we proceed to our more direct object, by endeavouring to form an impartial estimate of the worth of Brethrenism, testing it by some obvious scriptural principles. From the books which have now passed in rapid review before us, we shall make such quotations as will aid us in the design, and help the pastors of our churches and others to determine whether it is desirable to abandon their present position, and to embrace that which is professedly a more excellent way. We trust that we have no interests to serve but those which belong to the kingdom of Christ, and that we have but to learn his will in order to endeavour to obey it. Could we be convinced that the Brethren are right, and that we are wrong, we hope we should be prepared to avow our sentiments, and act accordingly; for no fear of consequences should deter a Christian from treading fearlessly the path of duty when once ascertained; while in proportion as the consequences attendant upon every step are solemn, should he be anxious to be fully assured that he is not mistaken as to his convictions of duty. We candidly confess that a careful examination of the principles of Brethrenism, and an observation of their practical working, have not made us very much in love with the one or with the other; and we have yet to find, in the writings of the Brethren, any scriptural and conclusive arguments against our general views of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. We are not the advocates of abuses which may have attended the working of our principles; still, we conscientiously think that there is nothing in the constitution of our churches opposed to the revealed will of our glorious Head, and that all the defects of our practices are only such as may be remedied, in proportion as we receive gracious baptisms of the Spirit, without that destruction of our existing platform, for which the Brethren vehemently contend. We have yet to learn that there is a greater amount of spirituality in their churches, or of power in their ministry, than among ourselves, or some other bodies of Christians; nor have we hitherto discovered the principles recognised by evangelical Dissenters which renders them necessarily carnal, restrains the Spirit, and keeps them back from usefulness. But with all this and much more are we deliberately charged by our self-constituted accusers and judges. We are not merely defective, not only corrupt and needing the correction of godly discipline, but are actually apostate. Hear the Brethren—

“Indeed we may certainly say, that infidelity, that most awful infidelity of the latter days, which makes man and the people every thing, and God nothing, is the sure and manifested tendency of Dissent. The Congregational system itself is a

deliberate departure from the word of God, which has substituted the government of the flesh for that of the Spirit, which has put man in the place of God.”—Reasons, &c., pp. 23, 24.

Such is the picture afforded of the principles of our churches; and equally flattering are the sketches furnished of their pastors, who are elegantly said to be “dripping with Greek and Latin, chosen to take the sceptre of carnal authority, selected to extinguish the spiritual life of all the saints.” Still further—

“The students are taught in the college; and in their college learning is their strength. They receive a call to a church; they are duly ordained by the *imposition* of hands; they mount the pulpit, and they preach such things as they have scholastically acquired. Sometimes in the course of their ministry the doctrines of grace are unlocked and brought out of the strong box, but it is with caution and timidity; for nothing the minister so much dreads as that his people should not be practical, and so he takes care to be practical, and metaphysical, and rhetorical, but all this time he has never known by experience what it is to flee from the pursuer of his soul to the city of refuge; he cannot in the grateful remembrance of his own salvation say, ‘O taste and see that the Lord is good.’ The grapes of Eschol will not ripen on the walls of Highbury, Rotherham, and Spring Hill. Is it to be expected that teachers with such an education should place their joy and strength in those doctrines in which there is life and power for the church? The answer may be taken in the fact that the doctrines of grace are but very faintly acknowledged in the Congregational churches, and in some churches are never mentioned at all. ‘Through this man is preached the forgiveness of sins;’—a subject, by the way, which is well nigh forgotten in these days in Congregational pulpits.”—*Ibid.* pp. 41, 44.

We need scarcely ask if all these representations are charitable, if they accord with that love which thinketh no evil; and we are far from envying the emotions of that man’s heart who could deliberately pen and publish such unsupported charges against a numerous body of his Christian brethren, making no exceptions, but involving them all in one common condemnation. We rejoice to believe that these accusations are groundless; that young men are not admitted to our colleges but on satisfactory evidence of their being partakers of Divine grace; that their education is conducted not with a view to display, but to usefulness; that the pulpit labours of many of our younger ministers are characterised by such gracious efficacy as to prove that they are sent of God; while our more advanced pastors, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, are devotedly labouring at their Master’s bidding, and following the course of their fathers, who once shone as lights in the world, reflecting much of the lustre of the Saviour, and are now numbered with those who having turned many to righteousness shine as stars in the firmament for ever. Of this we are confidently assured, that myriads of voices could be lifted up over the length and breadth of our land to testify, that so far from the doctrine of forgiveness by the blood of Christ being “well nigh forgotten in Congregational pulpits,” it constitutes, with its collateral truths, the great theme of Sabbath and weekly ministrations.

One of the grand evidences of our apostacy, in the judgment of the Brethren, is the fact, that most of our churches are content with one pastor to each congregation. This, with more expressiveness than elegance, they term the "one man system."

"The readiest answer to this objection," says Mr. Dobbin, "and a sufficient one, is, that it is *not our system*, although it is our more common practice, to have one minister only to each church. Our system is none other than that of Scripture, so far as we can ascertain the right. Thus, if the brethren are guided by apostolic ordinance and usage, so are we. Can they show many teachers over single churches? we can bring forward an inspired prohibition of such an arrangement—'Be not many teachers.' Can they appeal to more bishops than are at Philippi? we can point with equal readiness to the 'angel' over each of the Asiatic Churches. But we take other ground. There is nothing in *our system* that forbids our having as many ministers as we please, but our pleasure is regulated by the necessities of the case. Were the sheep so numerous as to require the services of more than one shepherd, we may appoint, nay we *would* appoint, as many as would constitute an official oversight.

"We can say, with the most unwavering confidence, that in our churches we are as prompt to avail ourselves of a variety of gifts and ministrations, as any church of the Plymouth brethren can be. It is well understood that the much-vaunted open ministry has now shrunk to dimensions little, if at all, larger than ours. The brethren who 'speak,' are now as much marked and known men as our pastors; and the expectants of the homily can fix their eyes as unhesitatingly upon the orator in those primitive assemblies, as though he were seated in a pulpit, or habited in a gown. To such a fact as this *we* cannot object, whose known practice it is to expect a certain brother, honoured and beloved, to visit us from season to season, with the fruits of long thought and mature wisdom, with the utterances of the Spirit's mind, as he can collect it from the word, by deep reverential study; but we do object to all this, coupled with a disclaimer of it. We do object to the departure, 'from the simplicity that is in Christ,' which such a course implies, and we do loudly and righteously object, to the denunciation of all bodies of Christians, on grounds which, by force of time and circumstances, they are constrained to occupy themselves."—pp. 29—32.

In further stating our objections to Brethrenism, we do not mean to unchurch its advocates, and mete to them with the measure they have meted to us. We believe that there is a fair amount of piety among them, and this might be expected from the fact that many excellent though weak-minded Christians have been attracted by their novelties, and have left the churches in which they were born and nourished for the fellowship of the Brethren. Their societies, however, have been gathered too rapidly, under such various influences, and have had so little time to prove their steadfastness, as to forbid the expectation that they are much purer, or much more eminent in attainments, than other Christian communities. Indeed, instances of defection have already occurred among them, which might teach them not to be high-minded; but forasmuch as we believe that they would withdraw from any disorderly brother, we are prepared to hold communion with them, on equal terms; but to this, while asking for union, they have no inclination. This is, to us, one of their striking and painful imperfections. They occupy an insulated position, take no interest in the

prosperity of surrounding churches, wrap themselves up in their own enclosure, and unless they have hope of bringing over some one to their own views, in which case they are condescending and kind, they treat the whole Christian church as heathen men and publicans. Can this spirit be right? Is such conduct justified by an appeal to the precepts or examples of the New Testament? We believe not.

Akin to this is the very unjustifiable zeal they evince in making converts, not from the world, but from other churches. Their appearance in a neighbourhood is the signal for strife, and contention, and division, and all their concomitant evils. No feeling of delicacy, no regard for the perpetuity of an existing church, no concern for the comfort or even support of an aged pastor, prevents their labouring to draw away disciples after them. They seek individuals who are wealthy with singular devotedness. Journeys from Plymouth to Taunton, and from Devonshire to Westmoreland have been multiplied, to secure a person whose coffers are well-filled, or whose name would be likely to aid their cause. In many cases, like locusts, they alight on the finest part of a sacred enclosure, and fatten on it till they have reduced the garden to a desert. Some singular facts ought to be known in reference to their mode of gathering the saints. In Devonshire, where ultra-Calvinism has much prevailed, they have drawn away many persons, from different churches, who could not well bear to have their pastors preach to sinners, and who can now attend the Lord's-day morning services of the Brethren, and receive strong meat, and absent themselves from the evening service, when the world is simply threatened with judgment. In Hereford and other places, where an efficient ministry had previously collected many into the fold, they have entered on other men's labours; but on the perishing masses of the great manufacturing towns they have made no impression, and scarcely attempted it. In Plymouth, where a few wealthy and aristocratic persons from different parts of the kingdom, have settled down, and brought their wealth and connexions to bear in aid of their proselytism; where they have tempted the poor by visitations and gifts, and paid the debts of insolvents, they have succeeded in collecting, at an almost ruinous expense, several hundred persons, principally from other Christian communities; but in the neighbouring town of Devonport, where these convincing arguments have been wanting, they have never succeeded in raising a congregation of any extent. We readily leave to them the work of robbing other churches, convinced as we are that our pastors are more honourably and usefully employed in seeking the extension of the Saviour's kingdom, by multiplying converts from those "that are without."

Loud and deep are the complaints of the Brethren as to the political spirit and worldliness of the church. Now, we have no wish that our ministers should be violent partizans, or that our influential members should expend their energies in aspiring to municipal honours, or in



seeking further parliamentary reform, as we believe that mere legislation has much less to do with the onward career of human improvement than is sometimes imagined; still, we do contend, that in becoming Christians we are not called upon to renounce all interest in the state, and to act as though tyranny and equitable rule, slavery and liberty, monopoly for the benefit of the few, or wide-spread comforts for the advantage of the many, are things of perfect indifference. Here we think the Brethren decidedly wrong. In reference to nearly a million of slaves, many of whom were believers in the Son of God, they not only refused to deliver them from bondage, but could write, "The negroes are guilty of sin in asking for emancipation, and will suffer for their conduct in this respect;" and this notwithstanding an apostle has said, to one who was "called, being a servant, (δοῦλος, a slave,) if thou mayest be made free, use it rather." A choice aphorism of the Brethren's is this, "A philanthropist can hardly be a Christian." But was not Howard a Christian? and who needs doubt the Christianity of Wilberforce? Was not the great apostle of the Gentiles a philanthropist; and did not this character belong to the Saviour, as he went about doing good? To the direct or indirect influence of Christianity, all the genuine philanthropy found in our world may be traced. To it we owe our national, social, and individual comfort, the security of equal laws, and the blessing of religious liberty; it has alleviated the horrors of war, and given a deadly check to its practice, and originated those institutions of mercy which aim at the temporal well-being of the human family; but in all this the Brethren see, or affect to see nothing but the spirit of "a professing generation who have departed from the faith of Christ, and walk not in his ways, and of a world which still lies in the wicked one."

If the testimony of the Brethren is to be taken, they are the only persons who declare all the counsel of God; and the apostacy of the church is to be seen in the non-belief of the pre-millennial advent of Christ; this, however, like many of their other allegations, is destitute of foundation. They are not the only persons who hold the doctrine of a personal reign, and they certainly are not justified in representing those who regard the Saviour's reign as spiritual, as thereby withholding the moral influence of the second advent. We do hold the truth of final judgment, and of a resurrection of the just and of the unjust; and from this belief motives are drawn for immediate repentance, and constant preparation for the coming of the Lord; and the more so as we believe, that for all purposes affecting the destiny of men, our going to Christ at death is equivalent to his coming to us by judgment. We are not sure that sufficient prominence has always been given to this truth in the ministration of the word among us; but we have no doubt that even allowing the views of the Brethren to be correct, on the order of events to occur in the latter days, they have given them undue pro-

minence, induced a contentious spirit, and produced a re-action which has greatly aided the unscriptural and absurd sentiments now circulated in Exeter, Torquay, and other places, that "the resurrection is past already, and that the church is in a glorified condition."

One great point on which Brethrenism boasts itself and condemns the churches of Christ is, the subject of Christian unity. We yield to none in our desire to promote this, and we do not see that Congregationalism places any impediment in the way of its accomplishment; while we have yet to learn that the Brethren are more united than other Christians, or that they are going the right way to promote the manifested union for which they contend. To us, they appear to confound unity with uniformity, and to imagine that the prayer of Christ for the oneness of his people has never been answered, and thus to overlook the actual union of Christians. Their terms of a visible union are not mutual concession and forbearance, but involve the abandonment of all our convictions and cherished preferences for an external conformity to their mode of worship, and the belief of their peculiar tenets. That they are very united among themselves is not quite clear; especially after the recent jealousies and divisions at Plymouth about a popular speaking brother, who went over from the Dissenters, and who found his position uncomfortable, and his support insecure, under the Brethren who have "the gift of rule;" while their conduct to other bodies of Christians could only be unfavourably contrasted with the deportment of such communities to each other. Holding mere platform charity, as we do, at a very cheap rate, we have yet found in the meetings of Bible, and missionary, and kindred societies, that which we deem the spirit of Christian unity, in reciprocal acts which have proved that social preferences are every way compatible with enlarged Christian benevolence. Our united meetings for prayer, in which Congregationalists and Wesleyans, Presbyterians and Baptists, join, prove that we are one in essential things; while we occupy, as occasion serves, each other's pulpits, and commemorate unitedly the death of our Master and Lord. But Brethrenism stands aloof from all this, and, while avowedly longing for unity, delights itself in scattering abroad the elements of a fierce contention. A proposition alike honourable to the head and heart of one of our brethren, whose praise is in all the churches, has been recently made for a more extensive and visible union; will the Brethren come to its aid? We know enough of them to say, they will not.

The overweening conceit the Brethren have of themselves, and the censorious spirit they display to all others, are to us very offensive. Hear their oracle, "The Inquirer." "The Brethren object to worldliness, whether religious or otherwise. More perhaps than any other Christians they desire to be quiet in the land. Their joy is not in hearing talented sermons, eloquent harangues, and brilliant orations, but in

living together in the bonds of the Spirit, and hearkening to the teachings of the supreme Doctor of theology, who from his chair in the heavens, opens the deep things of God in the hearts of his people." All this may be true, and well to be uttered, if there were not such a scriptural injunction as this, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth." But not content with this self-praise, they as decidedly condemn all others. Again hear the oracle; "To any one who knows the meaning of the word name in Scripture, it must be evident that *none of the sects* meet in Christ's name." This announcement is followed by a declaration worthy of the church of Rome; "Where the disciples are united, simply as disciples, in the enlarged love of the heart and mind of Christ, it can be said with truth, He that is not of our communion shall undoubtedly perish everlastingly, for to be separate from them is to be separate from Christ." See where these assumptions lead; none of the sects meet as disciples, but the Brethren do thus meet, and not to meet with the Brethren is to perish everlastingly. Extremes often unite, and the oligarchy of Plymouth has coalesced, in spirit, with the hierarchy of Rome. Indeed it has long looked favourably on the man of sin, and attempted to turn aside the threatenings of the apocalypse from this fallen church, by saying, "Babylon does not mean Rome, but a political system of which Dissenterism and Radicalism form a part." Happily for the sacred cause of Protestantism, these powers, separate or combined, are unable to abridge our liberties or to coerce our consciences, and we hope to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. If the spirit of Brethrenism is to be judged of by its writings, we wish not to come into its secret, and prefer to be identified with persons of a more tolerant and forbearing temper. Beautifully contrasted with the spirit of the passages we have just quoted is that of one with which we conclude. It is from the essay "On Candour," by the Rev John Newton, an episcopal clergyman, and should our friends or opponents allow it to sink down into their hearts, it will not be transcribed in vain. "Let us be candid; let us remember how often we have changed our sentiments in one particular or another since we first engaged in the search of truth; how often we have been imposed upon by appearances; and to how many different persons and occurrences we have been indebted, under God, for the knowledge we have already attained."

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#### THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

The Works of William Jay, collected and revised by himself. Vol IV. Morning and Evening Exercises. October to December. 12mo. C. A. Bartlett.

A Manual of Devotion for Individuals; or Selection of Scripture Readings, Hymns, and Prayers, for the Mornings and Evenings of four weeks; with Hymns and Prayers for various occasions. By an Octogenarian. 12mo. Jackson & Walford.

National Warnings; A Sermon, Preached on behalf of the Distressed Manufacturers, at Claremont Chapel, Pentonville, on Lord's Day Morning, Aug. 28th, 1842. By the Rev. J. Blackburn, Minister of the Chapel. 8vo. Jackson & Walford.

The Biblical Cabinet. Vol. XL. Expositions of the Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and Colossians. By John Calvin, and D. Gottlob Christian Storr. Translated from the originals, by Robert Johnston, 12mo. Thomas Clark.

The Study of Creation; A Lecture delivered at the Literary Institution, Truro, Cornwall. By P. J. Wright. Second Thousand. 12mo. R. Groombridge.

Sermons, Chiefly Designed for Family Reading and Village Worship. By J. Burns, Minister of Aeon Chapel, St Mary-le-bone. Royal 12mo. Houlston & Stoneman.

A Dissertation on the very early origin of Alphabetical Characters, Literature, and Sciences. By George Smith, F. A. S. 8vo. Simpkin & Marshall.

A Sermon for the Times. By a Layman. 8vo. Longman & Co.

Remarkable Insects. Square 16mo. Religious Tract Society.

The Life of Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. 16mo. H. G. Clarke & Co.

Chronological Pictures of English History, from William the Conqueror to Queen Victoria. By John Gilbert. Imperial Folio. Roake & Varty,

The Old Sea Captain. Square 16mo. Religious Tract Society.

The Youthful Christian: containing Instructions, Counsels, Cautions, and Examples. By J Burns. 12mo. Houlston & Stoneman.

Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland Illustrated from drawings. By W. H. Bartlett. The Literary department, by N. P. Willis Esq. Parts XIV. XV. G Virtue.

Elements of Latin Hexameters and Pentameters. By the Rev. Robert Bland. 12mo. Simpkin & Co.

Canadian Scenery Illustrated, Parts XXIII. XXIV. 4to. G. Virtue.

The Rudiments of the Greek Grammar as used in the College at Eton; intended to combine the advantages of modern grammars with the justly esteemed and well established Eton plan. Edited by the Rev. J. Bosworth. D. D. F. R. S. Fourth Edition. Simpkin & Co.

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## LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Early in October will be Published, The Conciliator of R. Manasseh Ben Israel; A Reconciliation of the Apparent Contradictions in Holy Scripture, to which are added Explanatory Notes, and Biographical Notices of the Quoted Authorities. By E. H. Lindo, Author of the Jewish Calendar.

A Memoir of the late Rev. Christmas Evans, commonly called "The Great Christmas, or Modern Apostle of the Welch." Compiled chiefly from his diary, and other select remains in his own hand-writing. With Specimens of his Sermons, Allegories, &c. Translated from the Original Welch. By Edward Lewis.

In the Press, and will be ready in a few days: Canterbury Tracts. Designed for Church Members and Young Christians. 1. Holy Scriptures the only Authority in Religion. 2. Origin and Translation of the Scriptures. 3. Constitution of Apostolical Churches. 4. Apostolical Bishops and Episcopacy. 5. Christian Ordination not to a Priesthood. 6. Apostolical Succession Disproved. 7. Christian Ordinances not Sacraments. 8. Baptismal Regeneration a Delusion. 9. Rise and Progress of Prelatical Episcopacy. 10. Origin of Liturgical Forms of Prayer. 11. Doctrinal Harmony of Protestants. 12. Are Dissenters Schismatics.

## CHRONICLE OF BRITISH MISSIONS.

## HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNALS OF THE MISSIONARIES.

THE following extracts furnish specimens of the various kinds of difficulties which Home Missionaries have to encounter in this country while pursuing their work. It is, however, cause for gratitude to God that, notwithstanding all the opposition made by men to the labours of Home Missionaries, the Great Head of the church is honouring them with success.

"The following is the substance of an hour's conversation, a few days since, between one of the clergymen on the station, and a young man who attends our chapel. It took place at the young man's house, the day after the meeting of the Bible Society for the district, at which the clergyman took the chair.

Clergyman. Well E, you come to church I see, sometimes.

E. Yes sir, sometimes on the Sunday afternoon; but I mostly spend the time in reading the Bible, and meditating on the morning's sermon.

C. Where do you go in the morning?

E. To chapel, sir, with my wife.

C. O! your wife goes to chapel?

E. Yes sir, she always goes, and I never wish to control her.

C. The Methodist Chapel?

E. The Independent Chapel, sir.

C. What is the difference between the Independents and the Church?

E. I consider, sir, that *real* Christians, whether Independents or Churchmen, are the same.

C. But why do you prefer the Independent Chapel to the Church? Mr. D. gave me a tract, (No. 1, Congregational Union Tract Series,) which I have read, and I see no difference between Independents and the Church.

E. Sir, when I go to chapel, I hear the minister pray for us all, and I feel the prayer warm my heart. But at church, the same prayers are read over and over again, and it is altogether a cold and dead thing.

C. Cold and dead! Where will you find such prayers as ours? Neither Mr. D., nor I, nor any man living, can make such prayers as those now. Look the Prayer Book through; look at our Articles, &c., you'll find nothing like it.

E. It will not do, sir, we must go to the one thing, that is the Bible.

C. Yes, yes, that's all right. But as to the Chapel, such a set of scoundrels go there.

E. Scoundrels, sir? O that all the scoundrels might be converted! O that I could see all the scoundrels coming into the chapel, and coming out like lambs! Sir, I think it is the duty of all Christians to pray that the scoundrels might be converted. But if I go to the church, what do I see? Do I not see plenty of scoundrels about the church doors, and in the gallery; do I not hear the singers cursing and swearing at each other during the service?

C. Yes, I know it is very bad,—I should be glad to see it different. But after all, the church is the place to go to.

E. You don't mean the walls of your church, sir, do you? I would rather hear a *good* man preach *out of doors*, than I would hear a *bad* man preach *in the church*.

C. Would you? then I don't agree with you. However, I would prefer a *good Dissenter* to a *bad Churchman*: but if they were *both good men*, I should prefer the *Churchman*.

E. True Christians, sir, are one. Do you think, sir, that God will in the day of judgment, inquire if a man went to church, and prefer him on that account?

C. Yes, I think a *peculiar* blessing rests upon the Church. But I must be going; good day.

E. Good day, sir.

Having heard the young man's story, I congratulated him on his defence of the truth. He said, 'I prayed to God that he would enable me to speak boldly.'—*(Dorset.)*

"As yet I see no direct results of our late most interesting and promising revival meetings; nor do I hear of those results in connexion with the other parties who united with us. But I will not despair of the ultimate success of a faithful, patient, persevering course of labour and visitation for the salvation of men. Independent of extraordinary meetings, the word of God seems to be taking effect upon several hearts, and our little church is likely to receive several additions at no distant day, of parties who have for some time past given evidence of a change of heart. Political feeling is very strong and violent in this district, and many absent themselves from the means of grace under the *avowed impression*, that they shall thereby teach us our duty, and bring us to its faithful discharge, in the preaching *political freedom*, as well as the liberty of the Gospel.

These sentiments were unscrupulously avowed in a deputation of members, and others, from the three congregations lately united for revival purposes, who waited upon us, the ministers, and it was with no small difficulty that we could resist their importunities, or rather oppose their demands, upon this painful topic. Within the last month, our congregations have appeared smaller than usual; but I know not to what extent to trace the falling off to the cause just named. Now our own congregations see us united, and resolved to maintain as strict a neutrality as possible on political matters, they may let us alone to follow out our own convictions of duty, by knowing nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

In the mean time, much is being done in gathering and consolidating the materials, which will prove the basis of something better in a few years. Our schools progress, our teachers are improving in knowledge, character, and piety, and sooner or later, I believe the most prejudiced will be constrained to say, "The Lord hath done great things for them." In the town itself there is a field of vast extent, which four Catholic Priests are cultivating with great assiduity; but not with a success by any means greater than we, the least favoured of sectarians, enjoy; and our Methodist brethren are not one half so successful as in years that are past. In the agency of the Eternal Spirit we have a power equal to the work before us, and that Spirit is promised to them that ask him. The fervency of humble prayer, the confidence of simple faith, are all that our position and our necessities demand."—*(Leicestershire.)*

#### IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

THE newly appointed secretaries of this Society feel, that they ought not to allow the next "Chronicle of British Missions" to appear, without addressing their beloved brethren, in town and country, in reference to that interesting branch of these missions with which they are now more immediately connected. At the earnest request of the committee, they have undertaken the secretaryship of this institution, under its present circumstances of darkness, difficulty, and depression. Events, over which the committee have no control, the principal of which may be traced to the severity of commercial and manufacturing distress, have led to a serious diminution of their funds during the last two years, so that even after the little available stock of the Society was sold, the treasurer was in advance, at the last annual meeting, more

than £700 ; while the receipts of the current year have hitherto been insufficient to pay the salaries of the agents, and the Irish Congregational Union has a claim upon our funds to a considerable amount. Such is the seriously responsible position of the Society, which while it gives no occasion to despondency, yet imperatively urges to prompt, vigorous, and liberal efforts on its behalf. The claims of Ireland are as powerful as ever they were ; the fields of usefulness opening up before us are truly cheering ; and we have many devoted, right-minded men labouring in them, with such a measure of success as demands our grateful thanksgivings to the God of all grace. It is due to the sacred cause of Protestant truth, and to the holy character of our Congregational principles, that we do not relax our efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ in Ireland, and we confidently rely on the kind and willing aid of our pastors and churches in renewed endeavours to benefit the sister land. An immediate attempt will be made in London, to extricate the Society from its present difficulties ; this will be followed by an appeal to the wealthier members of our churches, in the country, for the same object ; and when once freed from incumbrance, the stated income of the Society will, we trust, be found adequate to its expenditure. We think that much more may be easily done for the Irish Evangelical Society than has hitherto been done, or even attempted ; we hope that an impulse will be given to our proceedings, at the adjourned meeting of the Congregational Union, in Liverpool ; and we have little doubt, that at the next annual meeting of the Society, we shall have the satisfaction of presenting to its friends a cheering report of its past successes, connected with the well-founded prospect of its increasing prosperity.

THOMAS JAMES, } Secretaries.  
GEORGE SMITH, }

London, Sept. 22, 1842.

#### COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

ON Tuesday, the 13th of September, the Rev. J. Roaf embarked on board the "Hendric Hudson," for New York, at Portsmouth. His companion, the Rev. James Drummond, and family, had embarked from the port of London, on the 7th of September. It is to be hoped their voyage will now be soon and safely completed.

On the 5th of September, the committee had met these beloved brethren for final conference, and mutual explanations, on all points touching their important mission, and for devout supplications on their behalf. This fraternal farewell proved a pleasant and edifying service ; and appropriately concluded the confidential intercourse of the committee with their beloved coadjutors previous to their departure for the scene of their labours. There may they be long and abundantly blessed !

On the evening of the same day, Monday, the 5th of September, a public valedictory service, to take leave of these brethren, was held in Stepney Meeting House, the Rev. Dr. Fletcher's. That spacious building was filled with a crowded assembly. The Rev. Thomas Binney opened the services with devotional exercises, and a short explanatory address on the nature and occasion of the proceedings. The Rev. J. Roaf then addressed the meeting on the religious state, and wants, and prospects, of the British Colonies ; on the duty and interest of the British Congregational churches to prosecute missions in that wide field, and in the Canadas especially, with immediate and vigorous efforts. Mr. Roaf also pointed out how available the emigration to the colonies of many religious families, might be made to promote both their private interests, and the cause of Christ ; and explained that if intending religious emigrants to the Canadas, would, previously to entering on the enterprise, or even determining their course, write for information to himself, or the Rev. H. Wilkes of Montreal, they might be at once directed to localities where their secular interests



being also regarded, they would obtain the advantage of an immediate connexion with some one of our ministers and his people, and while they enjoyed this privilege, would in their turn strengthen and uphold the cause with which they thus became united. Mr. Roaf then feelingly acknowledged the kind and fraternal welcome he had every where met with among the pastors and churches of the fatherland, and took an affectionate leave of the meeting as assembled in the name of the Society, and of his brethren, to bid him farewell. The Rev. James Drummond followed Mr. Roaf, and took leave of the pastors and churches of the East London District, among whom he had laboured for eight peaceful and happy years, with much emotion. Mr. Drummond desired the prayers and sympathy of Christians at home to follow him to his distant scene of labour and sacrifice. The Rev. Dr. Andrew Reed responded affectionately to the sentiments expressed by Mr. Roaf and Mr. Drummond; assured these beloved brethren of the confidence, affection, and support of the meeting; and commended them to God with a parting prayer and benediction. The Rev. Dr. Fletcher closed these very interesting services with prayer.

While in his native land, our dear brother, Mr. Roaf, has visited above seventy of the principal churches of our body, chiefly in the midland and north midland districts. Every where he has been received with fraternal kindness; and he found the minds of the brethren, and of their friends, prepared to regard most favourably the great object of missions to the Colonies. By private intercourse, by discourses from the pulpit, by lectures on emigration, Mr. Roaf has laboured abundantly and successfully to diffuse information, and to awaken interest, in the Christian enterprise to which he has devoted his life and energies. It is confidently hoped that future results will prove how fruitful in happy influences these appeals of our faithful and able advocate have been.

During his visit to England, Mr. Roaf has favoured the committee of the Colonial Missionary Society with the fullest statements and representations of the State of Canada West, and of the Congregational Missions in that fine province. Every such enterprise must have its drawbacks and difficulties; but on the whole, the prospects in Canada West are most encouraging. There is a band of devoted and faithful brethren. There is a Theological Academy, with an able and excellently qualified tutor. A powerful and favourable impression has been made by our Missionaries on the public mind. There is an almost boundless field for the development of national resources and power. The political causes that once produced general discontent, seem in a good measure adjusted, and their recurrence provided against. But action in this scene of encouraging enterprise, to be successful, must be both vigorous and early—vigorous, for every thing in Colonies is active, and feeble efforts to promote the interests of religion will no more succeed there than feeble efforts for other objects:—early, because there is now an opportunity of which even a short delay will deprive us.

Mr. Roaf has returned with disappointment, in respect of one movement, for which he had cherished hope that his visit would prove successful. Two important stations in Canada West—Kingston, and Niagara—urgently require to be occupied. Mr. Roaf hoped to be cheered himself, and to delight the brethren in Canada, by conducting forth as the companions of his return, two ministers to labour in these stations. Nothing prevented the committee from using the most strenuous efforts to accomplish this effort, but want of funds. Had the necessary pecuniary resources been at command, or even in near and tolerably certain expectation, the committee might, in all probability, have been successful in securing brethren suitable for the enterprise. As it is, they have resolved to incur the responsibility of sending forth the two brethren needed for these stations, if obtained, in the early spring of next year. It required some courage and confidence to arrive at this determination, in

times such as the present, when the troubles of the world press upon the church; and the people of God, with diminished means, are called upon for increased exertions. But it is right to have faith in God, and confidence in his people. In even troublous times, the walls of Zion must be built. The cause of God must be neither abandoned nor enfeebled, because sacrifice and self-denial may be necessary to carry it forward.

The committee have also determined to send forth, if possible, at the same time with these two brethren proceeding to Canada, some able and devoted minister to Wellington, in New Zealand. There the foundations of a flourishing settlement seem to have been laid. Those noble islands, so productive, so salubrious, so surrounded with bays and harbours, so fitted to be the emporium of the traffic of the vast Pacific, cannot but be destined to be peopled with a powerful nation. There is a fine scene for timely effort. Many of our people are already there. Other religious bodies are already there in activity,—most of all the Roman Catholics. Their efforts far exceed those of the Protestant communities. The Papal see pants to redeem its losses in Europe, by conquests in Australia. This alone is a powerful reason for the active efforts of Congregationalists in those regions. It is to be feared, that still the friends of error and superstition are more wise and active than the advocates of truth. Christians must be sent to Idolaters, Protestants to Papists, to learn devotion and sacrifice for the views they respectively espouse.

The conductors of public societies may be blamed for pressing on with efforts and appeals, in these anxious and difficult times. They may be thought to bind heavy burdens, and lay them on their brethren. But what can they do? They cannot resist all importunate cries for help. They cannot neglect every favourable opportunity presented by providence. They must not yield to timid counsels, and spread despondency around. They cannot deem the resources of the churches exhausted, or the "ne plus ultra" of giving reached. When the committees of public institutions venture on these advancing movements, their own share of the anxiety and responsibility, and generally of the contribution too, is greater than that of any others of their brethren.

But in addition to these projected movements, there are others under consideration. The Rev. Henry Wilkes, of Montreal, has visited, at the request of the committee, the British North American Colonies on the Atlantic. The full report of the inquiries and observations of Mr. Wilkes in these important regions, is not yet before the committee, nor the proposals for further efforts that may grow out of them. Movements at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and at St. John's, New Brunswick, cannot, however, be long delayed. If Congregational Christians have any adequate zeal for the truth and liberty which are their own fair inheritance, and of which they are the professed advocates, they will leave no portion of the British dominions where they will not lift up a standard for them.

Meanwhile, it is no enormous or overwhelming amount of pecuniary support that is required by the Colonial Missionary Society. If its average income hitherto, of about £2500 per annum, were increased by an additional £1000, all openings, at present before the committee, might be vigorously occupied. The 30th of October is anticipated with no little anxiety. The results of the collections then made will greatly determine how far British Missions have the sanction and approval of the churches,—how far that great enterprise is henceforth to flourish or to languish.

## TRANSACTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.—The adjourned meetings of the Twelfth Annual Assembly of the Union will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 11th, 12th, and 13th days of the present month.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 11th of October, the introductory sermon, on the intercommunity of churches, will be preached by the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, of Leeds, in the Crescent Chapel, the Rev. J. Kelly's; divine service to commence at half-past six o'clock.

Meetings of delegates and visitors will be held in the mornings of Wednesday, the 12th, and Thursday, the 13th, of October, in the lecture room of Great George Street Chapel, the Rev. Dr. Raffles'. These meetings will commence precisely at nine o'clock, and close precisely at three o'clock. They will be presided over by the Rev. J. Leifechild, D.D., Chairman of the Annual Assembly of which these meetings are an adjournment. Important business will occupy the attention of the brethren.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 12th of October, a public meeting will be held on the interests and principles of the Congregational Churches; and on the evening of Thursday, the 13th of October, there will be a second public meeting to advocate the British Missions connected with the Union. Both these meetings will be held in Dr. Raffles' Chapel, Great George Street; and will both commence at six o'clock precisely.

Brethren intending to be present at these meetings, are earnestly requested to communicate their intention to Mr. David Marples, Bookseller, Lord Street, Liverpool, by post, on or before Friday, the 7th of October, that timely arrangements may be made for their hospitable entertainment. The committee of preparation cannot hold themselves responsible for the disappointment of any brethren who neglect to comply with this request.

## ANNIVERSARY OF AIREDALE COLLEGE.

ON Tuesday, June 21st, the annual examination of the students of this Institution was held at the College. It was conducted by two sets of examiners, who commenced their labours at nine in the morning, and continued them till after eight in the evening. The Rev. J. Glyde, of Bradford, presided in the theological department, and the Rev. B. B. Haigh, of Tadcaster, assisted by Mr. Munro, A.M., of Silcoates seminary, in the classical and mathematical. From their report it appears, that during the session the various classes have read as follows:—

*First Class.* In Hebrew, the Books of Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, and Habakkuk, and collated them with the Septuagint. In Syriac, the first epistle of the Corinthians. In Mathematics, from the 1st Prop. of the 6th Book, to the 13th in the 11th. In Greek, Apology of Socrates, by Plato. In Latin, Four Orations of Cicero against Cataline. In Greek Testament, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Epistles of John, Jude, and 10th chap. of Revelation. French, in Bossuet and Boileau.

*Second Class.* Hebrew, Isaiah, from 27th to the 53rd chapter, collating it with the Septuagint. Syriac, Matthew, from the 17th to the 23rd chapter. In Mathematics, 6th Book of Euclid. In Greek, half of Demosthenes' Oration "De Corona." In Latin, the 1st Book of Pliny's Letters. In Greek Test., 17 chapters of the Acts.

*Third Class.* Hebrew, 78th Psalm, collated with the Sept., 2nd chapter in John's Gospel, translated into Hebrew. In Greek, 900 lines in Soph. Œd. Tyr. Latin, Tacitus' History of Germany, and 30 chap. in the "Life of Agricola." Greek Testament, Romans and James. Mathematics, 3rd Book of Euclid. Algebra, Surds

and Simple Equations. Mental Philosophy. Reid on the Mind. Essays on what they read.

*Fourth Class.* Greek, Anabasis of Xenophon, 6 chapters. Part of John's Gospel. Latin, 1st Book of the Odes of Horace, and Epistle to the Pisos. Mathematics, 32 Propositions of the 1st Book of Euclid: studied also Bellamy's True Religion, and Butler's Analogy, Tytler's Elements of Universal History. Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric, and Algebra as far as Fractions.

In Divinity, Lectures, accompanied with examinations and the writing of Essays, had been given to all the students, on the Attributes of God, and on Biblical Criticism; and sermons and plans had been read weekly, and submitted to critical investigation. In ecclesiastical history, Mosheim had been used as a text book, with weekly examinations on what had been read. In mental philosophy, the first and second classes had studied Whately's Logic, and written essays on the subjects of their reading. The following is the report of the examiners.

"The Committee have great pleasure in recording their satisfaction with the results of the present examination. In the Greek and Latin classics, in the Hebrew and Syriac languages, as well as in the departments of logic, ecclesiastical history, Biblical criticism, and theology, it is manifest that the knowledge acquired by many of the students has been accurate and extensive. The fluency and correctness with which the greater number, including all the seniors, read and translated various extracts, selected by the examiners from the professed readings of the session, the skill displayed in grammatical analysis, and the promptness and correctness with which all questions in logic and theology were answered, afford pleasing proofs of the assiduity with which teachers and students have laboured to secure the important object contemplated by the Institution."

(Signed) JONATHAN GLYDE, B. B. HAIGH,  
JOSEPH STRINGER, J. MUNRO, A. M.  
ALEX. EWING, A. M.

On Wednesday, the anniversary of the Institution was held, commencing in the College chapel, at 11 o'clock, A.M., when two of the students read essays, which were very creditable to their abilities and attainments. Mr. Hillyard, on the "Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin;" and Mr. Jones, on "Justification by Faith;" after which, the Rev. James Parsons, of York, gave a luminous, instructive, and eloquent address to the students on the "Nature and Importance of Christian Zeal," which he was unanimously and earnestly requested by the constituents of the College to print. At the conclusion of the services in the chapel, the constituents adjourned to the College, where, the chair being efficiently occupied by H. Forbes, Esq., the usual business of the Institution was transacted. In the evening, an excellent sermon was preached, by the Rev. W. Hudswell, of Leeds. With the exception of the fact, that the income is still below the expenditure, every thing connected with the anniversary was of a satisfactory character. The next session will commence with twenty students, which is equal to the number of studies. On account of the want of room, and the deficiency of the funds, the committee have been obliged to decline several applications, on behalf of promising young men, for admission into the College.

#### ORDINATIONS, ETC.

"By the church of Rome, ordination, or orders, as it has been called, is exalted to the dignity of a holy sacrament, by which her members say the special gifts and grace of the Holy Ghost are conferred, and also the power of absolving or retaining sin.

"By others, ordination by the bishop is thought to confer an *exclusive* right and authority to exercise the sacred ministry; so that all who exercise the ministry not

being episcopally ordained, are no better than pretenders to the holy function, and thieves, and robbers, in the fold of Christ. And, also, it is thought to stamp an *official sanctity* on him who receives it, which remains perpetual and indelible in all circumstances, unless it should be erased by the degrading power of one of the same order which first impressed it.

■ We apprehend, that by such sentiments as these ordination is overrated.

There are not wanting those, on the other extreme, who have depreciated this rite, as an unscriptural ceremony of human invention; arbitrarily introduced into the churches as useless and pernicious, savouring of Popish superstition, and calculated to encourage and inflame priestly pride, and clerical dominion.

■ But let us look into the sacred books, and see how the matter is represented there.

When sacred officers were wanted in the *first* Christian church at Jerusalem, we are informed, (Acts vi. 2,) "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them," and exhorted them to look out among themselves "seven men of honest report," of attested reputation, (*μαρτυρουμενους*) "full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, whom," said they, "we may appoint over this business." Let them be *chosen* by you, we will set them apart and ordain them, (*καταρτησομεν*.)

■ We read also, (Titus i. 5,) that Titus was left by Paul in Crete, for this cause, that he might *ordain* (*καταρτησης*) and constitute elders, or bishops as they are called, (verse 7,) of a proper character, (verses, 6 7, 8,) of which none but the resident people could be adequate judges, in every city.

■ These two passages, compared together, join to attest that, in the primitive church, while the *election* of sacred officers was an act of the people or the church, the ordination or investiture with office was performed by the public ministers; and to the fairness of this representation, I believe the testimony of the earliest ages might be easily produced.

I have sometimes thought that the subject might be illustrated in this manner.

■ Suppose two parties; they consent to unite together for some important purposes; agreements are privately prepared, which are to be publicly declared and solemnly ratified on an appointed day. The day arrives—the parties meet—the contract is fulfilled and sealed before proper witnesses, and according to usual, prescribed, and authorized forms.

■ Thus ordination consists of a most serious, solemn, and public *attestation to* and *confirmation of*, a mutual choice between a *minister* and *people*; and of the solemn *designation* and *appointment* of the chosen minister to the highly honourable and unspeakably important office of pastor; and this is performed by the instrumentality of elder pastors, convened on the occasion. Thus were the earliest ordinations celebrated, in the first days of the Gospel, by Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, in those cities and towns where converts had been embodied into Christian societies. People and ministers were both engaged—the people by lifting up their hands or by some other visible token, declaring their approbation and choice; the ministers, by laying their hands on the head of the chosen minister, while fervent prayer was poured forth for him and for the flock.

■ And here I would remark, that the laying on of hands was a custom of Divine appointment and of high antiquity. By the express command of Jehovah, was Joshua *thus* set over the congregation of Israel by his venerable predecessor, Moses, (Numbers xxvii. 8.)

■ *Thus* were the seven deacons appointed, (Acts, vi. 6.) *Thus* was Timothy ordained, (1 Tim. iv. 14.) But although I dare not assert that this rite is essential to ordination, yet considering it as an ancient practice, in the purest and earliest ages of the church of God, and as a solemn, significant, and striking token of designation to

holy office, we judge it lawful and proper to continue the use of it upon such occasions as these."—*An Extract from Mr. Kingsbury's Discourse delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. George Clayton.*

**MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE.**—On Thursday, March 10th, 1842, Mr. J. H. Barrow, late of Hackney College, was ordained pastor of the Congregational church in this place. The Rev. J. Barton, of Ellesmere, commenced by reading and prayer; the Rev. J. Pattison, of Wem, preached the introductory discourse; the Rev. J. Mandeno, of Newport, proposed the usual questions; the Rev. T. Minshal, of Prees, offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. T. Raffles, D.D., LL.D., of Liverpool, gave the charge, founded on 2 Tim. iv. 5, "Do the work of an evangelist." In the evening, the Rev. T. Weaver, of Shrewsbury, preached to the people, from 2 Cor. ii. 8, "Wherefore, I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him." The other parts of the services were conducted by other ministers. Between the services, which were numerous and respectably attended, the ministers dined together; and about fifty other friends, from the neighbourhood, were accommodated at different houses in the town. It would have been pleasing to those aged ministers who once knew this cause in a very low state, to see what has been done, and what is doing, towards its revival.

**KELVEDON, ESSEX.**—On Thursday, May 26th, 1842, Mr. E. F. Hughes, formerly of Hackney College, was ordained pastor of the Congregational church in this place. The Rev. R. Robinson, of Witham, introduced the service by reading and prayer; the Rev. S. Steer, of Castle Hedingham, delivered the introductory discourse; the Rev. E. Prout, of Halsted, proposed the usual questions; the Rev. T. Craig, of Bocking, offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. A. Wells, of London, gave the charge, founded on 1 Tim. iv. 6, "A good minister of Jesus Christ." The Rev. J. Kay, of Coggeshall, concluded. The intermediate parts of the service were conducted by the Rev. W. Merchant, of Laver Bretton, and other ministers. In the evening, the Rev. R. Burls, of Maldon, preached to the people, from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Each of the services was attended by a respectable and crowded audience. During the interval of worship, the ministers, and about forty other friends, dined together at the Star and Fleece Inn; after which, some excellent speeches, adapted to the occasion and the times, were made by the Rev. Messrs. Wells, Steer, Prout, &c.

#### EASTERN CANADA.

##### RUSSELTOWN—ORDINATION—FORMATION OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE Rev. David Gibb, late of Dartmouth College and Andover Theological Seminary, who has laboured for some time in the above townships with much success, was ordained on the 27th ult. to the work of an evangelist, and the pastoral oversight of an infant church which was organized on the succeeding day. The ordination took place at the Flats, where, through the indefatigable and laudable exertions of Mrs. Forbes, a commodious sanctuary has been reared, in which the Gospel of the grace of God is faithfully proclaimed to a deeply interesting congregation. This chiefly consists of Scotch settlers, scattered over the surrounding district, who seem to appreciate the advantages of a Christian ministry amongst them, and who proved, by their attendance, and by the deep interest they manifested in the proceedings of the day, that they were fully prepared to welcome and sustain the labours of the young brother who then received the oversight of them in the Lord.

A fearful thunderstorm on the night of the 26th, accompanied with heavy rains, ushered in a day of surpassing loveliness. At an early hour, the farmers, with their wives and families, were seen emerging in all directions from the woods, and moving in their light and commodious vehicles towards the place of sacred convocation. As

the hour of service approached, the scene around the sanctuary was intensely interesting—waggons constantly arriving, laden with the willing worshippers,—the horses loosened from the disburdened vehicles, and grazing amidst the surrounding trees—and groups of well-dressed men and women moving to and fro interchanging their mutual expressions of Christian courtesy, and congratulating each other on the happy issue of their long-cherished hopes in reference to the desired supply of the bread of life. The scene was—as a scene—romantic, and viewed in its associations present and to come was even morally sublime.

The service commenced soon after 10 A.M., when the Rev. H. Wilkes engaged in the introductory devotional services—and the Rev. J. J. Carruthers delivered a discourse on the constitution and design of a Christian church. A brief interval was their given for refreshment, after which the Rev. J. J. Carruthers asked the usual questions, and offered the ordination prayer. The Rev. H. Wilkes then delivered the charge to Mr. Gibb, and subsequently addressed the people. The services were closed about three o'clock. They were throughout enlivened by the exertions of an American choir who had come from Moer's Corner—a distance of twenty miles, to testify their interest in this important movement, and to give their British brethren a practical proof of their fraternal love. Such self-denied exemplifications of Christian charity demand a grateful acknowledgment, and we are assured that the friends in Russeltown will hail the first opportunity of reciprocating the kindness of their neighbours.

On the following day, at Russeltown, after a sermon by the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, on Tim. vi. 12, fourteen individuals were constituted into a Christian church, with whom several others subsequently united in the Lord's supper. The Rev. H. Wilkes presided. The place of meeting was the school-house, and the audience respectable, comprising several soldiers, a detachment of whom regularly attends the ministry of Mr. Gibb. May our beloved brother be eminently successful in turning sinners from the error of their ways, and extending the spiritual dominion of the King of Zion!

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### BRIEF NOTES ON PASSING EVENTS.

THE pressure of intelligence more immediately connected with our sectional interests, has compelled us to omit "Brief Notes on Passing Events" in our two last numbers. The kind wish expressed by some intelligent correspondents, that we would resume and regularly continue these notations, calls us to a task which we cannot hope, satisfactorily, to fulfil, now that the events of three months have flitted past us. We will, however, advert to those which have most impressed our own minds, and which seem to require the thoughtful notice of those who would observe the signs of the times.

The news from CHINA has demonstrated the inability of its vain government to offer any successful resistance in the field to the invading forces of Great Britain. The *élite* of their army, about 8000 strong, including the Kansuh troops, said to be invincible, and the imperial body guard, under the command of Yih King, has been defeated with an almost annihilating slaughter by the British army, in the neighbourhood of Ningpo. While humanity deplores such a carnage, it is gratifying to learn that our troops forbore to afflict the unoffending inhabitants, and that not a home was violated by them, in their march against the enemy. It is to be fervently desired that such disasters may lead the infatuated rulers of that vast region to seek a peace that shall confer upon both nations reciprocal advantages.



The affairs in **AFGHANISTAN** remain as unintelligible as ever. Lord Ellenborough is charged with having resolved to abandon the enterprise, and leave the British prisoners in the hands of their barbarous enemies! This we trust will be found untrue, and that long before now they have been delivered, by negotiation, exchange, or money, or even the sword, from their cruel captivity.

With the most sincere gratification we record the happy termination of the differences between the governments of **England** and **AMERICA**. Lord Ashburton, the British minister, who possesses extraordinary sympathies with the American nation, considering the party to which he belongs, has been honoured to adjust the boundary question, that has been in dispute since the treaty of peace, 1783, and if something more has been conceded by him than political partizanship can approve, still England can afford to be generous, when settling with her children of America a reckoning of sixty years. May the God of peace grant that no root of bitterness may again spring up to alienate two nations, who, when united, have it in their power not only to defy but to bless the world.

In **EUROPE**, nothing has occurred which threatens to disturb its happy repose; still events have occurred that are instructive and admonitory.

The Emperor of **RUSSIA** continues to maintain that system of persecution against his Roman Catholic subjects, which called forth, without effect, the allocution of the Pope. This results from the secret influence of the Greek Church, for which certain Oxford divines have expressed so strong a sympathy; or we might more justly say, that it is the natural result of church domination, unrestrained by political liberty.

The Rhenish dominions of **PRUSSIA** have recently been visited by their Sovereign, and other German princes, on an occasion interesting to the lovers of art and national union, but still painfully illustrative of the latitudinarianism of the age—we mean the laying of the first stone of the buildings that are to complete the most magnificent gothic edifice in the world—the cathedral of Cologne. On that occasion, Frederic William, with his Queen, first attended Divine worship at the Protestant church, and was then present at high mass, and laid the foundation-stone. This work, that has stood still for ages, is now to be completed, according to the sublime conceptions of its original architect, by the revived liberality and zeal of the present age. No man of taste can behold those glorious aisles without feeling the fascination of the scene, but no man of God can look on the shrine of the three kings within them, but must shrink from the superstition that reared, and which has recently adorned, that apocryphal relic. Kings and statesmen, by patronizing all religions, lead the multitude to suppose that they think all religions are alike, and to be used only as fitting instruments to promote the purposes of government. If love of the fine arts, or the policy of statecraft, be sufficient to justify this in a Sovereign, who professes a zeal for Protestantism, where will these things end? The union of the empire, and the refinement of taste, were, doubtless, valued by the Protestant princes of Germany in the fifteenth century, but to them there was something more precious than the dominion of the one, or the pleasures of the other. Would that their royal descendants displayed the same uncompromising devotedness to the simple forms and scriptural principles of primitive Christianity!

At **HOME**, since we last wrote on "Passing Events," the Parliament, which, from the extraordinary circumstances connected with its election, may be called in history the Bribery Parliament, has been prorogued, after having modified the corn-laws, imposed an income tax, lowered the prohibitive duties, and continued intact the new poor laws—measures which, however necessary or useful in themselves, are the very opposite of those for which the aristocracy, the squirearchy, the clergy, rode roughshod, in that contest, over the free suffrages of the people.

In the northern districts there have been very threatening outbreaks of popular violence, especially connected with the question of wages. The authority of the law could only be maintained by a great military force, and scenes of terror, and of blood, resulted from the insane proceedings of the deluded operatives. The jails have been crowded by an unprecedented number of prisoners, who have been arraigned at the bar of justice by dozens and scores. One of their counsel at the York assizes, having indirectly suggested that the Anti-corn-law League had produced this outbreak by its discussions, Lord Chief Justice Denman, who presided, had the manliness and patriotism, worthy of his best days, to remark, "That on the part of the people of this country, he must assert the right of free discussion, and of peaceable statement of grievances, and unfortunate as it was, that the discussion, either of political questions, or of the laws regarding provisions, should produce excitement and ill-feeling, it was still the undoubted right of Englishmen to meet, and peaceably to discuss the grounds of what they deemed just complaint."

Our gracious Queen, with her royal consort, has visited Edinburgh, and given great offence to the members of the Presbyterian Church Establishment, because her Majesty did not attend its religious services, but preferred the ministrations of a clergyman of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. This, considering the part that Church played against her Majesty's ancestors, was an odd and an ominous preference, but which, assuredly, the Queen was at liberty to avow.

We admire the brave soldiers of the 71st Regiment of Highlanders, who refused to enter an Episcopal church at Chichester, by quickly saying, "*This is na oor place o' worship*"\*—and assuredly we cannot grudge that liberty to the Sovereign, which is claimed by the soldier or the subject. But, then, what comes of the establishment and expediency principles? Sincerely do we hope that this little circumstance, which has been so keenly felt by our Presbyterian brethren, may supply them with another argument against continuing to submit to a patronage that is more likely to be exercised against the spiritual interests of their church than in its favour.

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#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Favours have been received from the Rev. J. Jennings—A. E. Lord—Samuel Roberts—W. Scott—W. Robinson—J. Smith—C. Harrison—O. T. Dobbin.

Messrs. W. Cooke, jun. M.D.—A. Wemyss—John Palmer.

A. R. H.

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\* Vide *Patriot*, September 8th.